

*In late September, shortly after the announcement that the Russians had the atomic bomb, WALTER LIPPMANN left Washington on an extended trip to Western Germany, France, the Middle East, and South Asia. On his return he felt under the increasing necessity of redefining the Atlantic Community in the face of present realities. This he has done in a series of talks, the first at the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences, again on the occasion of the Newton D. Baker Memorial Lecture in Cleveland, and still more recently at the American Council of Foreign Relations in Chicago. The article which follows is the development of his main points.*

## BREAKUP OF THE TWO-POWER WORLD

by WALTER LIPPMANN

IT is my very good fortune to have worked under Newton D. Baker — very far under him, I hasten to add, and in a quite humble capacity, but yet near to him personally — in a time when he was facing grave and momentous decisions. I remember one hot evening in July, 1917, when he called me into his office in the War Department, saying he had finished for that day, but would I stay a little longer and just listen to him while he put his feet up on the desk and talked out loud and tried to clear his mind.

He was deeply troubled and puzzled, he said, by something which he had never in all his public experience come face to face with before. He had lived in the conviction that any problem could and should be taken to the American people, and that after they had heard the whole story argued out publicly, they would come to the right decision.

But knowing, as Secretary of War, what I know about the power of Germany, the weakness of the allies, and our own unpreparedness, he said, I don't know whether I dare to tell the people how badly the war is going that they are just beginning to take part in. If they were told the whole truth, if they knew all that I know, would the Germans not learn where to strike at our weakest points, and would not our people be so discouraged and confused that they would not do what will have to be done to prevent a disaster? And yet if our people do not

know the whole truth, will they believe us when we ask for their sons and send them to the battlefields in Europe? And if we fail in the war, will our people ever forgive us, and ought they ever to forgive us, when we did not trust them in the crisis of their destiny?

I wish Newton Baker were with us now. For the question that he raised that night in Washington, nearly thirty-five years ago, is with us now, is with anyone who undertakes to talk about the crisis — the indubitable and immense crisis — in which we and all the world are involved.

When we look at the Far East, at Southeast Asia, at Germany, at the United Nations, and at the race of armaments in which we are engaged, the facts are grim. But the raw facts will seem more desperate and more hopeless than they really are, only, I believe, if we interpret them and measure them in the light of the outdated theories, the doctrines, and the conceptions which were popular during the past three or four years. I am referring to the ideas, expectations, and plans which are based on the Truman Doctrine and its corollary, the policy of the military containment of Russian communism.

The mounting crisis in our foreign relations marks the failure of the Truman Doctrine, and if we cling to the ideas of the Truman Doctrine, the collapse of our influence in China will be followed

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by the collapse of our influence in the whole of Asia and in Central Europe. But I believe that this menacing movement of events can be stopped if we are able to brace and nerve ourselves to reconsider and to revise our policy in the light of a fresh, objective analysis of what is actually happening. Let me begin by naming six developments which are of critical significance.

The first is that the American monopoly of atomic weapons ended sooner than the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Congress and the public expected.

The second is that Mao Tse-tung has succeeded in capturing the leadership of the Chinese revolution in the whole of continental China.

The third is that in Southern Asia the British Empire and the Dutch Empire have been dissolved and have been succeeded by the independent Asiatic states of India, Pakistan, and Indonesia.

The fourth is that in the rich colonial area of Southeast Asia, in Indo-China, Malaya, and Burma, there are civil war and anarchy because the authority and power of the European empires have been undermined, but no native independent states capable of governing themselves have emerged.

The fifth is the secession of Marshal Tito from the Soviet orbit in Eastern Europe and the tendency of Titoism to spread to Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

The sixth is the revival of Germany as a power in Europe.

All of these developments have come to a head within the past year. None of them was, of course, entirely unforeseen. Yet it is the combination of these events which has, I believe, created a radically new situation that will compel all the governments to re-examine their estimates of the cold war and their calculations and their policies.

I venture to suggest that the net effect of all these developments combined marks the beginning of the end of the idea that the world must, and that the world will, align itself in two camps, the one directed from Moscow and the other from Washington. That idea has been at the root of Soviet policy, and also of American policy. It is the one idea which the communist world and the non-communist world agreed upon. Both have said it was a true prediction of what would happen.

The orthodox communists regard this doctrine of the division of the world into two camps as the guarantee of a beautiful hope. They believe that if the world can be divided into two camps, the non-communist camp will break up because it is not united by a common doctrine, because it is not ruled with an iron hand, and because it represents all stages of political development from advanced democracy to the most reactionary, corrupt feudal and imperial regimes.

The Western world, on the other hand, has regarded this division as an ugly necessity forced

upon it by the unity of the communist world, which compels it to organize in one grand coalition all the non-communist states. In every doctrine of the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist creed we have challenged the basic principles except in this one. We too have said that the world would be, could be, and had to be divided into two camps.

I believe the time has now come when we have a right to ask ourselves whether the theory is in fact true. We have a duty to ask ourselves whether in fact our minds have not become infiltrated and misled by the basic dogma of the very creed against which we think we are fighting. And I believe that if we examine the facts of the world as they are, rather than the communist theory, if we look at what is really happening and what is most probably developing in Asia and in Europe, we shall find the strongest reasons for doubting whether mankind can be or will be organized into two and only two coalitions.

Even before the events of this past year the two coalitions were by no means complete and they were far from solid. We know to what lengths of suppression and terror and purging the Cominform has had to go in the satellite countries in order to keep them subordinated to the Kremlin. And we know from our own experience how complicated has been the task of achieving unity of action in Western Europe under the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Security Pact. Everywhere on both sides of the Iron Curtain nationalist and separatist forces have interfered with the organization of the world into two great alliances.

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IF WE look more closely at the six big developments which I named before, leaving aside for the moment what has happened in the field of atomic energy, I should like to point out that there is a common denominator in five of these developments — namely, the rebellion of Tito, the Chinese revolution, the independence of India, Pakistan, and Indonesia, the breakdown of authority in Southeast Asia, and the revival of Germany. In each case one or both of the two coalitions has lost or is losing control of an important region. But in no case is it at all certain that the one coalition has won the region that the other has lost.

Russia has lost control of Yugoslavia. It by no means follows that Tito could or would align himself wholly and reliably with the Western powers. The tendency which we know as Titoism is manifestly at work in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. We know that from the purges conducted against communists who have devoted their lives to the movement. On the other hand, it would certainly be a delusion to suppose that communists who rebel against the domination of the Kremlin have become intel-

lectually and morally converted to the ideology of the Western democracies.

There is strong evidence that a similar tendency is at work in Germany. It manifests itself in the concessions which the Soviets are making to the East Germans in order to appease and to seduce the German nationalists inside the Christian Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the parties of the Right. There is, on the other hand, growing evidence that even the West German Republic is more and more disinclined to accept the position of a docile and subordinate member of the Western coalition.

I think it is no exaggeration to say of Germany that with the establishment of the government at Bonn and its unmistakable growth in political and economic power we are in the process of relinquishing our control over the future of Germany. I think no one can go to Germany today and continue to believe that Mr. McCloy and his colleagues, the British and French High Commissioners, have it in their power any longer to determine the future of Germany. They are in fact liquidating the power of the Western allies over Germany, and are being drawn into negotiations about a series of demands made by the Germans. No doubt the United States, Britain, and France still have a certain discretion as to the rate at which the Germans shall recover their sovereignty. But the time is already clearly in sight when the Germans will recover it and when the Germans will make German policy.

I shall not dwell at any length upon the developments in Southern Asia, except to point to the well-known fact that there are seven new independent states in Southern Asia — namely, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Israel. Of these the biggest and most influential is India. As these states have achieved their national independence, they have declared that they will not enter into the military and political coalition of the Western powers or of the Soviet Union.

Pandit Nehru was quite explicit on that issue when he was in the United States, and I have no doubt myself that here he reflects the purpose of all the new national governments of Asia. They have decided, as this country did 150 years ago when it was new and weak, to avoid a policy of entangling alliances. There is little reason to think that anything but an overt military invasion of Southern Asia by Soviet or Chinese communist armies could alter their decision.

When we turn to the Far East there is, of course, the obvious fact that the Chinese government which we backed has been defeated. The victorious leaders of the Chinese civil war are communists. They have declared that they are the allies of the Soviet Union. They have turned their backs on Washington. They have gone first to Moscow.

But it is by no means certain that the marriage

of the two communist revolutions is indissoluble. For many generations the imperial interests of Russia and the national and imperial interests of China have been in conflict all the way from the Sea of Japan to the Pamir Mountains along a borderland that extends 4000 miles into the heart of Asia.

Moreover, over the larger part of that immense borderland the peoples on both sides of the political frontier are neither Russian nor Chinese but are peoples of various tribes and nationalities of Asia over whom both China and Russia assert power and influence.

While it is true that we have lost our power and, for the time being, most of our influence in China, it by no means follows that Russia has won control of China or has achieved an enduring alliance with China. It is not wishful thinking, but common sense informed by historical experience, to say that if Russia finds it difficult to maintain its domination over small countries in the Balkans, there is no reason to jump to the conclusion that she can consolidate her domination over this much vaster and more complicated region of the world.

Turning to Japan, it is clear, I think, that our position has been seriously weakened by what has happened in China. The main economic connections with Japan are on the mainland of Asia. There lie the most important sources of Japanese imports. There lie the principal markets of Japan. Nor can it be denied that the strategic security of Japan has been greatly affected by the fact that the whole mainland of East Asia — all the ports and airfields and the whole hinterland — is in communist and anti-American hands.

### 3

I HAVE left until the last the event which was announced by the President on September 23: that there had been an atomic explosion inside the Soviet Union. This event marked the end of the short-lived American monopoly of atomic weapons. Let us make the most favorable assumptions. Let us assume that we can make more bombs and bigger bombs than the Russians, that we can build faster planes with longer range, and that we can organize better defenses to detect, to warn, and to intercept. Even on these dangerously optimistic assumptions no one can doubt, it seems to me, that the military situation has become radically different from what it was when we had the monopoly of atomic weapons. The difference will, I believe, be felt soonest in Germany and in Japan.

During the period of our monopoly there existed a military stalemate between the Red Army and the American strategic air force armed with its atomic weapons. The one was a deterrent upon the other. The military defense of Western Europe and of Western Germany rested on our capacity to bombard the vital centers of Eastern Europe and



of Russia. The American atomic bomb pinned down the Red Army. It acted as a military shield behind which Western Europe could attempt to organize itself to revive its military defenses and to carry on its economic reconstruction.

On the other hand, the American monopoly of the atomic bomb, though sufficient for defensive purposes, was not sufficient for any policy which required direct military pressure upon the Soviet Union. The capacity of the Red Army to occupy the vital centers of Germany and of Belgium and of France excluded from the consideration of any reasonable man the idea of preventive war or of a diplomacy which aimed to compel the Russians to accept Western terms for the settlement of Europe.

The Soviet achievement of the atomic bomb, even if relative to us the Russians have only a few bombs, has changed the balance of military power. It has changed it most radically and critically, and first of all, in Western Germany and Japan. The question now is no longer how they are to be defended against the Red Army alone, but how they are to be defended also against atomic bombardment.

Until a few months ago that question had not been faced. It did not enter into the calculations and the plans of the North Atlantic Security Pact, or of the American military aid program. It was believed until September that while some day no doubt the Russians would achieve atomic weapons, that day was still in the future. Therefore the question of how the countries adjacent to the Soviet Union were to be defended against atomic weapons was hypothetical and could be passed by. But now it is an actual and urgent problem.

Both Germany and Japan are small countries containing highly concentrated industrial areas. The ultimate defenses against air attack — namely, dispersion and space — are not available to Germany and Japan. Germany and Japan are in fact the ideal targets of atomic warfare. Even if it is technologically possible to create an effective aerial defense against atomic bombardment, the difficulties of doing that are peculiarly great in Western Germany and in Japan, and the cost would be, I believe, prohibitive.

We are compelled, therefore, to re-examine the strategic situation. For the strategic formula on which we have operated from the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in the spring of 1947 to the signature of the Atlantic Pact in the spring of 1949 had as its major premise the American monopoly of the atomic bomb. Working on this premise, our chief military problem was to design and construct aircraft capable of penetrating the Soviet defenses in order to deliver the bomb.

But now we have the additional problem of creating defenses in a large number of countries which we have guaranteed, and in two countries, Germany and Japan, which we occupy and have

disarmed — defenses that cannot be penetrated by the Soviet air force carrying atomic bombs and by the Soviet navy carrying atomic bombs. Until recently there has been almost no public discussion of this problem in the United States. But it is being discussed anxiously abroad, and beneath the surface the reaction is profound. The effects of the new strategic situation in the countries I have just visited are unmistakable to anyone who looks beneath the official appearance of things.

#### 4

IN the exposed and vulnerable countries along the periphery of the Soviet Union the effect, I believe, has been to reinforce decisively their natural impulse to disassociate themselves from the two coalitions and to seek such security as they can find by recovering their independence from both. For in this new strategic situation *neither* the U.S.S.R. *nor* the United States can offer the vulnerable countries any guarantee, or even any reasonable hope, of security against the fearful devastation of atomic warfare.

The Russians cannot offer that security to the Germans or the Japanese if they join the Soviet Union in an alliance, and we cannot offer those countries security if they join us in an alliance. These countries have neither the offensive power of retaliation nor the power of defense. They are caught between two lines of fire, and whichever side they turn to can offer them nothing but the prospect of devastation from the other side.

The Germans cannot once again become the allies of Russia, as they have so often in the past, because Russia cannot defend them and they cannot defend themselves against American air power. But by the same token Western Germany cannot become the military ally of the West, as Field Marshal Montgomery and some of the French generals so fondly hope, because Britain and America cannot with certainty and effectiveness promise to defend Western Germany against Russian aerial attack.

The Germans are a highly intelligent people, especially in military matters, when they are not befuddled by demagogues like Hitler. They are confronted with a dilemma and they know it, and there is only one way out of it open to them which offers them any prospect — even if it is not a certain prospect — of security. The Germans will take that way out because there is no other way out. They will recognize that they lie between two armed coalitions, each attempting to win them over to it. They will exploit this middle position to recover their national independence by making demands and gaining concessions from both sides. They will by this method restore their unity. They will shake off the controls of the occupying powers. They will get rid of the military occupation. Then



they will develop their middle position in the heart of Europe outside either alliance, and in between both alliances, to regain their power and influence in Europe.

This policy will reflect the realities of their military position and their own vital interests. The Germans may call it a policy to neutralize Germany, or a policy of independence and isolation, or a policy of liberation, or conceivably a policy designed to make them equal members of a European federation of nations which is not part of either the Russian or the American military system. But whatever the Germans choose to call their policy, the course they are most likely to take — unless there is a general collapse and a civil and international war — is similar to the course which more and more of the leading nations in the borderland all around the Soviet Union are also trying to take. It is the policy of avoiding entangling alliances in a two-power world.

That is the course which India, Pakistan, and Indonesia have already decided to take. It is the course which Tito in effect is trying to take. It is the course which Austria is bound to take. It is the course which every country in the Soviet orbit would take if it could disentangle itself from the grip of the Red Army. It is the course they will all be taking if the Germans succeed in putting an end to the occupation of Germany and, therefore, to the presence of the Red Army on the Stettin-Trieste line.

The logic of the German situation is also, I believe, the logic of the Japanese. Because General MacArthur cannot guarantee Japan against atomic attack from the Asiatic mainland, the Japanese struggle to survive must take the form of a struggle to make Japan independent of both military systems.

## 5

THIS vast and complicated process, which is well begun but far from completed, is in fact the disintegration of the military alliances envisaged by those who have believed that the world could be organized into two military coalitions.

Can this process of disintegration be stopped and reversed?

I believe that in practice it will prove to be impossible for the United States to reverse this process in the countries immediately adjacent to the Soviet Union. That is to say, it cannot any longer be the object of our policy to meet the Soviet expansion by organizing a military coalition in which Western Germany, Japan, and China are to be, as we once conceived it, the principal outer bastions — in which the United States, Great Britain, and France would be the arsenal, the citadel, and the headquarters. That was a conceivable arrangement in the days when General Clay appeared to be supreme in Western Germany,

when General MacArthur appeared to be supreme in Japan, and when General Chiang Kai-shek was still the chief war lord of the greater part of China. It was just conceivable then because the United States had the monopoly of atomic weapons and could strike the Soviet Union without the prospect that the Soviet Union could strike back at the United States or at Great Britain or at France. It is not conceivable now.

My own view is, therefore, that the paramount object of our policy cannot be to contain Soviet expansion by organizing a global coalition. The paramount object of our policy from now on will have to be to frustrate and to disorganize and to disintegrate any Soviet attempt to form a global coalition.

The critical areas in which such a policy must operate are Germany, Eastern Europe, China, and Japan. We should prevent Germany, as she recovers, from making an alliance with Russia. That can be done. And the strategic air power we possess should be the perfect instrument of that policy. It should be plain to the Germans, even without the necessity of our making it plainer than it obviously is, that if they ally themselves with Russia they become the first target in case of a war with Russia. But since, if they ally themselves with us, they will become the first target of the Russian attack, we cannot ask the Germans, and we must not expect the Germans, to ally themselves with us. Therefore we should influence and encourage the Germans to do what so many Germans already want to do: namely, to identify German nationalism and German patriotism with German unity and with German independence. We should help the Germans to neutralize themselves in order to end the military occupation and the partition.

We should clear our minds of the fallacy that neutrality is altogether obsolete because so many neutral countries from Belgium in 1914 to Denmark and Norway in 1940 have been unable to maintain their neutrality. The fact is that, while some countries could not pursue the neutrality that they desired, others did manage to achieve it. In Europe, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Turkey, and Spain managed in the second war to remain nonbelligerent. And it will, I believe, be increasingly difficult to convince a growing number of Europeans that the risks of attempting neutrality and disentanglement are greater than the alternative.

We must not misunderstand or minimize how people feel who know themselves to be disarmed, who know they cannot be guaranteed against invasion or bombardment, when they are expected to commit themselves irretrievably to participation in a war in which their allies and their enemies can offer them only the certainty of devastation. They know as well as we do that there is no certainty in a policy of neutrality. It may well be, they know, that they will be overrun, occupied, and destroyed.

But on the other hand they know also that as members of either alliance they are certain to be fought over. As neutrals they might have a chance of staying out of the havoc.

I believe therefore that we cannot ignore these feelings; that we shall fail if we try to override them. We should regard every country around the Soviet Union, — which seeks by diplomacy and by its own forces to preserve its independence, — as a military asset in the defense of the free world, as one less liability against our overextended military and economic commitments.

Within the framework of this new policy we, the British, and the French, as the leading members of the Atlantic Community, should support Titoism in Eastern Europe by taking a firm and unequivocal stand, as in fact we have, not against communism as such, but against Russian imperialism and Russian aggression. But in encouraging Tito to remain independent of Moscow we should not ask or expect him to become our ally.

In China we should do what Secretary Acheson has indicated that he wishes to do. We should offer Red China what we have offered all Chinese governments since the time of John Hay fifty years ago: our support, which the Chinese will eventually need, against dismemberment and imperialist aggression. *They should be made to feel that they have an alternative to submitting to the demands of Moscow, that they can turn to Washington and London, that they are not imprisoned in the Soviet system, that they are not limited to the economic help which can be drawn from it, that when they feel they need support and seek it, the doors will not be slammed in their face and they will not be driven back into the arms of the Russians.*

We should base our policy in Japan on a recognition of the vital interests of Japan. We should make it plain to the Japanese that we know as well as they do that they must trade with the Asiatic mainland, and that therefore they must be allowed to have diplomatic relations with their two Asiatic neighbors. Japan cannot be expected to join our alliance because we cannot defend Japan against Soviet atomic attack; but we can prevent Japan from joining the Russian alliance because we have the power to attack Japan if she does.

I am quite well aware that I cannot possibly have answered all questions and resolved all doubts. I do not know all the answers, nor have I resolved all my own doubts. I feel sure that the basic conception of our foreign policy will have to be reconsidered, and in important respects revised, in view of what is happening in Germany and in Eastern Europe, in the Far East and Southern Asia, and in the field of atomic energy. I think that our best course from now on is to work toward the general

objective of disintegrating the Soviet coalition.

That would mean that we put our influence and power behind the general tendency towards national independence, towards military neutrality, and towards diplomatic disentanglement — a tendency which is manifest in almost all of Asia, and in much at least of Central and Eastern Europe. I believe that in the last analysis the matter reduces itself to this: that since we cannot encircle the Soviet Union by a military coalition, we should cultivate and exploit all the national forces, all the human impulses to escape from the havoc of war, in order to prevent the Soviet Union from forming its coalition and in order to disintegrate its military alliances in Eastern Europe and those which it hopes to achieve in Asia.

I believe we can never afford to forget — as we form our policy — the true nature and the essential limitations of our power in the world. We are a continental island, separated by the oceans from the great land mass of the Eurasian continent. Inside that great land mass we have and can develop great striking power exerted at long range. But our power to occupy, to fortify, and to hold secure large land areas on the other side of the two oceans is limited. We are not and will never be a great land power on either continent. We can base no policy on the assumption that we might be. Nor can we base any policy on the assumption that the heterogeneous peoples of Europe and of Asia can be united, consolidated, armed, and defended in one military system.

We cannot organize military coalitions inside the Eurasian continent which require the presence or the immediate availability of large American land forces. The kind of naval and air power that we have and that we can exert will not support a policy which seeks to organize such a coalition. Our kind of power can be used, however, to support a policy which seeks to deter aggression by the Soviet Union by the threat of retaliation. Our power will support a policy which seeks to disorganize that coalition by encouraging the natural and almost universal human impulse, the national and personal search for an escape and for a refuge from the ravages of war.

In taking this new line, we may look back, recalling how the dream of one world was shattered, and then how the nightmare of a two-power world is breaking down. But now there is opening up the prospect of a world of many powers associated in the universal society of the United Nations, but not aligned irretrievably and not committed to the monstrous heresy and fallacy which we have inadvertently adopted from communist doctrinaires, that all mankind can be divided into two and only two camps.



## An Atlantic Story



"When I was a kid," writes RICHARD PIKE BISSELL, "I floated down the river twice and bummed the freights home." Then, after graduating from Phillips Exeter and Harvard, he returned to Iowa and again went on the river. He worked on the Monongahela, on the Ohio, the Missouri, and the Upper and Lower Mississippi, first as deck hand and then as mate and pilot. The story which follows is one of the more striking episodes in his first novel, *A Stretch on the River*, which will appear as an Atlantic-Little, Brown book. The Atlantic, which published Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*, is happy to find a worthy successor in Dick Bissell.

## THE BLACK GATES OF KEOKUK

by RICHARD PIKE BISSELL

THERE is always some alarming or dismal feature about every job, and in towboating on the Upper Mississippi River it is the lock at Keokuk, Iowa. This depraved lock is too short and too deep; the lockmen are more bored and obstructionist than any others; the extension guide walls are floating sheer booms that disintegrate and produce lawsuits, resignations, and dementia praecox; the upper sheer fence angles off from the direction of the lock wall causing despair and vulgar language on the part of the deck crews; and it is always either raining or 400 degrees Reaumur there. When the boats leave St. Paul or St. Louis the crews begin to bet and speculate as to which watch will get stuck with Keokuk lock, and mates have been known to commit self-destruction and other acts against nature on coming on watch and seeing the familiar contours looming in the river ahead.

"We're it," said Joe, the Second Mate, as we foregathered at watchtime by the engine-room door, and a beautiful zigzag of lightning suitable for framing shot down through the dark clouds hanging over the willows on the Illinois side. The rain we had been expecting all day began to fall. In the steaming misty near distance we could see the black gates of Keokuk lock beyond the drawbridge, and the old wooden fence of the sheer boom floating in the water below the huge pile of concrete.

"I'm glad I greased up these oilskins," I said.

"Where's Shorty?" Joe asked.

"Back in the pigpen trying to borrow a raincoat off of Hubert," said Diamond.

The town was close over on the port side, and we were all thinking what a good evening this would be to go to a show or out to the dance hall as we looked up at the streets and houses. We would be all evening getting our barges locked through, and with the raindrops already splashing in the river, it looked as if we were in for a treatment.

Captain Sargent blew the whistle for the bridge below the lock, and after a while the big swing span commenced to wheel open, so slowly you could hardly see it move at first.

So we stood there and Sargent eased her past town and on up toward the bridge. We could see right up the main drag. This was a sad kind of evening on the boat, with the neon lights reflected on the wet street so near at hand, a few cars so close we could hear the tire noises, and a smell of pork chops in the air. A Model A came down the street and stopped, and a girl in a blue slicker got out and ran into a store.

We could see the lockmen moving around up on top of the lock, getting ready to open the lower gates—they looked about the size of window washers way up on a building. We were right in the drawbridge now, and the lights of cars waiting in line for the bridge to close, and their suggestion of dry comfort, shows, restaurants, cocktail bars, didn't cheer us up much.

The lock blew an OK whistle at us as the big lower gates, like a pair of doors to a De Mille temple, parted in the middle and very slowly began to open in the gathering gloom.



"If that don't look like the goddamn gates to hell," Joe said.

The rain came down in big drops and finally broke loose with a regular backwoods cloudburst, so we could scarcely see the gates, and Captain Sargent, four barge lengths back, could see neither the gates nor us. We were coming up dead slow.

Shorty pulled off the rake hatch cover and slid down inside, out of the rain. Joe was on the starboard corner of the lead barge looking for that floating timber sheer boom. The rain was dropping down so hard it splashed right up your legs and found a way to get you wet in spite of the oilskins.

"There she is," Joe said. "Bill, run back a ways and holler at Sargent the Great and tell him he cleared the sheer fence."

I trotted back and hollered up at the Captain. He didn't hear me, so I went back further and hollered some more. Finally I went clear back to the boat and climbed up to the pilothouse and told him.

"Tell Joe to tie her off if he can, until the rain leaves off," he said. "I could see a hell of a lot more if I was under a thousand ton of coal. I'll drop her against that wood boom, and be careful you don't tear nothing up."

I went down and the rain was harder yet, and began to blow from the east, across the water. When it first started, it came straight down, but now it was beginning to slice and slash. I ran back on the port side and got an empty vinegar jug from the stern, slid into the galley, and filled it with coffee about a third of the way. The cook was standing there clean and dry in his white clothes, smoking a cigar. "Why don't you just get a pail and bail the whole river into my galley?" he said.

"Aw, have a heart, Harry," I said. "It's wet out there."

"Here," he said. "Put some milk in that there coffee," and he handed me a can of Carnation. "I'll leave you out a extra pie I made. Now get the hell outa my galley."

I got back in the rain again. I couldn't see much. The canvas line covers on the foredeck had blown their weights off and the coils were filled with water like little lily pools. I got back to the head of the barges all right and the tow had dropped against the floating guide fence and was still inching along upstream, but dying fast.

"If we can get two lines on her we'll stand less chance tearing up something. I'll ketch a line here and you ketch one on the quarter head, Bill, and we'll check into each other easy when she starts dropping back."

We got her tied off and a gull came and sat on top of one of the stakes they had the 40-watt bulbs strung on, and let the wind blow him around, and the rain was running off his feathers in trickles; he couldn't keep his balance — the fence was rocking back and forth — and he finally gave up and made a flop take-off and disappeared east.

"Ain't nothing much to do but set on these lines," Joe hollered. "You OK, Bill?"

"I could use a couple shots of old Peoria whiskey," I said.

"Someday I'm gonna buy me a rain outfit," Joe said.

## 2

THE rain began to slack off; first we could see the big wide steps beside the lock, then the gates came into view, and the big dark lock with sheer black walls. Sargent gave a toot, meaning turn her loose, and we spun our lines off the timberheads on the fence; they lit with a splash in the river and we pulled them aboard.

"Comin' ahead!" Joe hollered in a voice loud enough to scare the kids clear back to Canton lock, and gave a slow drag of his arm from low down in back, up over his head, and forward, like a slow-motion baseball pitch. Sargent poured it to her and we commenced moving up.

We got in the lock, and Sargent flopped the eight barges against the wall and they slid along slow and easy, once in a while throwing up cement dust and sparks when they rubbed the wall. Cap turned the light on Joe and Joe gave him a stopping signal and we drifted for a few minutes.

"Watch your heads. Here come the lines," hollered the lockman from way up in heaven someplace at the top of the wall and out of sight in the rain.

Diamond was back at the second coupling and I heard him holler. "OK, let her come. You can't kill me. Toss her down, old man Keokuk." Then I heard the klunk as the monkey-fist knot on the end of the heaving line hit the rake deck.

At the same time I heard another klunk, only more like bouncing a baseball on a cement sidewalk, followed by a clatter of breaking glass.

"What's that? Did Shorty drop that coffee jug? Shorty!" Joe said.

Shorty was lying down in the coal as if he wanted a nap.

"He's knocked cold," I said. "Joe, here's Shorty, out like a Monday night. He got hit with the heaving line."

Shorty was lying there in the coal with his finger still through the ring on the neck of the busted jug, and his old slouch hat had rolled off and was gathering summer rain.

"Oh, pretty mama," said Joe, coming across the deck. "That's what we need, a deck hand in the hospital."

I went over and bent the heaving line into our lock line while Joe was working on Shorty.

"All right, take it up!" I hollered up into the empty spaces, and my voice echoed back and forth in the walls of the lock. The line arose from the deck like the Hindu rope trick and traveled up and up till the eye in it disappeared over the edge of the lock wall forty feet above.

"Shorty. Shorty, you get up, hear me? Shorty, get up. Bill, this ole boy is cold," Joe said shaking Shorty and banging him around. "Oh, oh. Feel that knob on his head. Now I got nobody to stand the head line."

About this time Shorty opened his eyes and said, "I knew that mule would git me some day."

"Ah," said Joe, "he's alive," and picking him up and shoving him across the deck he said, "Give him the line, Bill. Let's you and me go back and jackknife. Come on, kid."

Shorty was standing there with a dazed look on his face. He didn't know where he was but he laid the lock line around the center cavel, ran it over to the timberheads, and began to check her like an old master. Last I saw him he had a good strain on the line and was standing there bareheaded with the rain still coming down, rubbing that knot on his head and looking up at his line rising in the air.

Joe and I jackknifed and broke the couplings on the two outside barges and Sargent backed her out, leaving three in. We tied off on the sheer boom and sat down in the rain. Shorty and Diamond were up in the lock on the barges, locking through, and the rain was coming down steady.

"Hightail it back and get us another jug of coffee," Joe said. "I'll set here and mind the lines. I can't get no wetter regardless."

I went to the stern again to hunt up another jug, and stood there for a minute and let the rain hit me from the east, and watched the cars down on the bridge, and then went into the messroom.

When I got out on the head again Joe was sitting on a timberhead and the rain was not coming down in such big drops but more concentrated, like a hotel shower. The lock gates were still shut; Shorty and Diamond were tying them off on the upper sheer boom about now; one of them would stay up there to watch the loads and the other come back to help with the second locking.

### 3

IT SEEMED like forever waiting for them to lock through and dump the water again; from the time the gates closed until they would open again to receive the second locking it was about an hour, maybe an hour and a quarter, but try sitting still or standing with nothing to do except think about how far it is to Wabash Ave. and what's doing tonight at the Aragon Ballroom with the rain coming down your neck and trickling down your backbone so it tickles and the cuffs on your gauntlet gloves wilt and crumple and the coal paste oozes in the hole in your shoe, and your cigarette falls apart and your clothes begin to smell like an old Irish wet wash without benefit of Hilex, and after ten minutes you'd swear to God you'd been in there a week and a half. It gets tiresome.

"Well," said Joe, "it's better than farming."

"Have some coffee," I said, handing him the jug.

We didn't look very romantic, dripping like a couple of muskrats in the evening gloom, even if Joe did have a star on his cap; so unless you want to take a lot of punishment, and work an 84-hour week, just stick to that course in bookkeeping, boys, because you won't find any white whale out here, and the packet boats and the gamblers are all gone. So wipe off your chin and look serious and they'll give you a desk to sit at and show you how to work the water cooler and you can buy a blue serge suit and after a while get advanced from a single-tier letter basket to a double-decker. Well, I like to put on a new tie and go to the show on Saturday night as much as the next guy.

"This here is just a disease, this steamboating, a incurable disease," Joe said, and set the jug down on the deck at his feet. "There ain't hardly a man aboard that likes this here life, but they're all here to stay. Diamond is thinking about chickens. Shorty is moaning and complaining all the time worse than a Methodist preacher. The mess boy wishes he had never left that red clay farm. You got that St. Paul girl and all the rest of the world's troubles on your mind. Vincent ain't hardly got the brains to be unhappy but he manages it somehow. Curly wishes he was back down on the Ohio River. The cook wishes he never had quit working in that restaurant he is always raving about. And Sargent is the biggest joke of them all. He thinks he is gonna get his pile and quit."

"I seen plenty of these smart guys that is just out here to make their pile and they are getting on and off these boats like they was streetcars. They are never content again. They don't know enough to hold down a good job on the bank. Any high school kid can slide up Main Street and get a better job. Can't you see Sargent striking out for a job down home. He goes to the mill. 'Well, what can you do?' says the foreman. 'Can you run a band saw?' 'No.' 'Can you read a blueprint?' 'No.' 'Well, what can you do?' 'Well, I got Pilot's License All Tonnage from Minneapolis to Baton Rouge and Cairo to Pittsburgh and Grafton to Chicago and Prescott to Stillwater and Kansas City to the mouth and Paducah to Sheffield and the Hennepin Canal.' 'I dunno what that's all about,' says the foreman, 'but whatever it is you better go do it.' He got no more chance to retire from the river than a catfish has to get into the Knights of Columbus."

About this time the gates commenced to open and Diamond came down the steps from the lock and climbed over the fence and aboard the barges and I went back to see whether Cap was up and about. He was taking a nap on the bench in the pilothouse and I told him the gates were open, so he blew a toot to turn loose and we shoved on up and tied off three more.

Perhaps Joe was right. Steamboating is an in-

curable disease. And as for getting away from it, why Blackie Johnson quit the river and never did come back; of course, he finally got locked up at Stillwater and the problem of his triumphal return as Mate was no longer a problem to him or anyone else except the parole board. Then there was old Captain Lawrence Arkwright Buckingham who made more farewell appearances than Geraldine Farrar and after cussing the river in a squeaky voice and inadequate vocabulary for seventy years retired at the age of eighty-nine to a houseboat which he parked dangerously near the channel below the dam at Alma, Wis., so he could continue to lacerate his nerves with the passing of each boat.

After you have been on the river long enough to get the disease, everything looks different: Chicago is a town 200 miles east of the river. South Dakota is someplace west of Minneiska and of no interest as it hasn't even a mile of Mississippi River in the whole state. Lake Superior is an inferior watery deposit of some kind, in a general northeasterly direction from Grey Cloud Landing. And as for St. Louis, Quincy, Davenport, Moline, Rock Island, Dubuque, La Crosse, Winona — what are they? River towns, of course. Not towns — river towns. And what a difference that makes.

There isn't anything in any of these towns, but they are the most romantic and wonderful in the world because they are old Upper Mississippi River towns. Of course there's a bird in La Crosse who made a scale model of St. Patrick's Cathedral out of matchsticks, a girl down in Muscatine born without any arms who can knit with her feet, and a fellow at Winona named Trask who made two holes in one one Sunday in 1928, but those towns would be worse than Waterloo, Iowa, in spite of these local attractions, except for the big Mississippi River rolling past the door day and night.

## 4

**D**iamond and I stayed in the lock to ride the barges up, and Joe stayed below with the two loads he had left and tied them off to the boom.

The lower gates closed and there we were at the bottom of the watery pit, waiting for salvation. I was tending the lines on the forward end of the barges, and Diamond was lost down at the other end in the gloom and rain, by the lock gates. I had a lock line to the center cavel and a peg line on the quarter timberhead to keep the barge from surging.

I sang "O Sion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling, To tell to all the world that God is Light," then switched to a lighter mood with "I'll Be with You in Apple Blossom Time," and finally they started raising the water and the barges got a little bit restless and commenced to creep up the wall.

"Hey, Diamond, think we'll get to the top by Hallowe'en?" I hollered.

"Wordely," he said, or something similar. It

rattled around and bounced so off the lock walls it might have been almost anything.

We had been in here twelve years already, so it didn't much matter any more. I sang the "Freight Train Blues" for a while, and thought about whether Merle would wear the black dress, the pink sweater, or the gray suit when I met her in St. Paul, and whether I should marry her or not, and whether I would have time in St. Paul to kiss her in all the different places I wanted to. After that I returned to Keokuk lock and spat on the slimy lock wall to add to the general moisture of the evening. Modern science had raised us up about twenty feet but there was more than that left to go, and whoever made the rain had sure left the faucet on.

One of the lockmen leaned over the top of the lock wall and looked down at us. "Think it'll rain?" he hollered. A humorist.

"Hell, no," I replied. "Wrong time of year."

"Well, it's good for the corn," says the guy upstairs. "Been awful dry around here."

"— THE CORN," Diamond hollered, making himself intelligible at last.

The lockman disappeared, his feelings hurt. I took up some slack in the lines. "By God, I believe we'll make it after all," I said to myself, because we were getting somewhere near the top now, and I could see the lights in the lock house through the rain, with the rain pouring down the windows and the lights unperturbed inside.

"Hello, you meat ball," I said *sotto voce* as the fat lock tender appeared again. "Merry Christmas, you silly bastard."

"Hey, how about hauling up some slack?" he said.

"What a capital idea, old man."

We were really at the top now, and ready for the upper gate to open. Meanwhile we had to go through the inexplicable waiting period connected with getting heavy pieces of machinery to start moving. It's always the same. You blow your whistle at the bridge tender and he comes out and waves a flag and rushes back in the control house again. What does he do in the next ten minutes? Read the instruction book on how to open bridges? Get out the dental floss and give his teeth a good going over? Finish a chapter in the Gypsy Dream Book? Finally the bridge commences to open.

Same with the locks.

"OK on the number three," says one lockman.

"OK?"

"Yeah — OK."

Five-minute lapse.

"OK then on number three."

"OK?"

"Yeah, OK."

O'Neill should get hold of some of this dialogue.

"Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel, and open those lock gates," I implored.



"How's that?" said the lockman, returning after a further exchange of OK's with the boss.

"It's a nice night for waterfowl, I said."

"I hope they enjoy it. I ain't," he replied. He was a fat goof who needed a number of pills or some Father John's medicine from his friendly neighborhood druggist. Frankly, I could have used a tablespoonful of Konjola right then myself. The rain had got inside my oilskins and I was steaming inside like a baked potato. Finally I gave up in disgust and took my oilskins off.

The upper gates commenced to submerge and I took up all the slack I could get and threw on some turns; the barges started to surge for the open water, and the line squeaked and jumped; I checked easy and the barges gave up the idea and settled down. The lockman brought me the towing wire and I slipped it over the timberhead, and after another round of OK's we commenced to creep out into the pool above. The lockman was wiping his glasses and complaining and abusing the weather department and cussing the government and the state legislature — as far as he was concerned there were no prospects in sight.

"Please, Lord," I said, "bless Papa and make it rain harder. Watching this man suffer makes me forget all my sins."

"What?" he said.

"I said down on the farm they are all setting around the kitchen table listening to the radio," I said.

He said if it didn't let up raining pretty soon he was going to tell them to take the job and shove it.

Our little game with the Keokuk lock was about over. Had I met the challenge? Had I faced up to the reality of things? Had I made myself worthy of MERLE, the beautiful ticket seller? Had I played the game or was I a rotter?

In short, the coal was on its way to St. Paul, but just where was I going? That was the question. Had I taken the right attitude with the lock tender? There I was and there was the coal and somewhere there was Merle, and there was nothing anybody could do about it. Should I marry her, or sell her to an agent exporting girls to Buenos Aires? I couldn't fit the pieces of the puzzle together.

In answer to my request the rain came down harder than ever.



## WHICH OF US TWO?

by PETER VIERECK

WHEN both are strong with tenderness, too wild  
 With oneness to be severance-reconciled;  
 When even the touch of fingertips can shock  
 Both to such seesaw mutuality  
 Of hot-pressed opposites as smelts a tree  
 Tighter to its dryad than to its own tight bark;  
 When neither jokes or mopes or hates alone  
 Or wakes untangled from the other; when  
 More-warm-than-soul, more-deep-than-flesh are one  
 In marriage of the very skeleton; —

When, then, soil peels mere flesh off half this love  
 And locks it from the unstripped half above,  
 Who's ever sure which side of soil he's on?  
 Have I lain seconds here, or years like this?  
 I'm sure of nothing else but loneliness  
 And darkness. Here's such black as stuffs a tomb,  
 Or merely midnight in an unshared room.  
 Holding my breath for fear my breath is gone,  
 Unmoving and afraid to try to move,  
 Knowing only you have somehow left my side,

I lie here, wondering which of us has died.



*Last summer DAVID L. COHN, author, far traveler, and fighting Southerner, went north to Finland to see what it was like to live with people who were under Russia's guns. Here are his impressions. Mr. Cohn, who comes from the Delta, has published a penetrating study of the South, entitled Where I Was Born and Raised; during the war, at the request of General Somervell, he undertook a trip of some 40,000 miles to our armies in the various theaters, recording his findings in a diary entitled This Is the Story.*

## FINLAND UNDER THE GUNS

by DAVID L. COHN

### 1

WE WERE merry that July afternoon in Finland's summer as we sat on a lawn high above a green-wooded lake, talking, laughing, telling stories — remote it seemed, from the glowering world in which we were. Finnish friends were giving me a party at their home near Helsinki; an alarmingly hospitable party. For the hospitality of Finland — even to one brought up in the Deep South — is almost overwhelming in its warmth and gusto. So we were very merry, but every now and then, almost as a mournful refrain to our festiveness — a disturbing note that smote upon the heart — I heard melancholy snatches of song borne upon the wind.

The singing came from the Russian military base at near-by Porkkala. After the war, the Russians seized an enormous tract of land near Helsinki, made everybody move out, and then moved in. Technically, they leased the land because dictator states like to move "legally," and Russia pays Finland a rental of 5 million marks a year for it. Then she charges Finland 25 million marks a year for the privilege of moving railroad trains through the base to other parts of the country. Finnish trains traversing the area are drawn by Russian locomotives and are in charge of Russian crews, while Finnish trainmen sit in a car with drawn blinds. Under no circumstances can they alight on the base, and once when a car caught fire and they jumped out, Russian soldiers shot at them.

"Do you ever see Russian troops?" I asked.

"Oh, no," my host replied. "They are brought into the base and taken out in trains with drawn shutters. They are not permitted to see either Finns or Finland because the lies that are told them about us would vanish in the sunlight of truth. So they stay behind their wire manning the guns that dominate the Gulf of Finland and Helsinki. Right now, you may be sure, they are looking at us from their

watchtowers and wondering what we are doing; something conspiratorial, no doubt, because to them any meeting of people is conspiratorial. After a while, you can see the base for yourself."

Here were people living literally under the enemy's guns. How, then, reconcile the high spirits of my friends with the dangers they faced? I thought of what a dear price the Finns had recently paid for their relative freedom. In Finland every twenty-fifth child is a war orphan, every seventeenth woman a war widow, every sixteenth man permanently disabled, every ninth citizen a displaced person.

As war reparations, Russia seized one sixth of Finland's best land and its only ice-free port. Homes had to be found for 400,000 people who left the Russian-seized area. This is as if we had had to take in 15 million refugees after emerging from a devastating war. In addition, Russia demanded 300 million dollars in goods to be manufactured by the Finns, including large quantities of ships and machines, with severe penalties for failure to deliver on the dot. It did not matter that the Finns had never had a sizable metalworking industry. They had to make bricks without straw, and they have done it. By 1952, they calculate, they will have paid all.

Finland, moreover, is not behind the Iron Curtain. It is easy of access to the foreigner. He is neither bedeviled nor spied upon, and the Finns are making preparations to receive thousands of visitors to the Olympic Games to be held in Helsinki in 1952. Nor is Finland a Russian satellite. The people elect their own government, and have preserved their essential freedoms. No Communist sits in the Cabinet although Communists have 19 per cent of Parliament seats, while the power of Communists in the press, the radio, the theater, and other places — including the labor unions —

is steadily being reduced. How do they do it?

I soon had an opportunity to ask. My hosts were discussing the question of adding a wing to their house and I inquired whether they thought it wise to do so when it lay under the Russian guns.

"We think so," replied my hostess, a slender, dark, middle-aged woman who had been decorated for bravery while serving in the Lotta (the Finnish equivalent of our WAC) during the war. "Suppose that we didn't build the wing because of fear of the Russians? Wouldn't they then be defeating us in our hearts? One defeat in *my* heart, another in my neighbor's, and soon we would be defeated as a nation. All is in the heart. All is from the heart. So we'll build the wing. And if the Russians come, we women will go and fight with our men. We always have. We won't whimper or complain. And that will make our men stronger in the battle."

In the crystalline light of late afternoon, amid green pines and multicolored wild flowers, some of us walked to the Russian military base. Inside its wire, soldiers stripped to the waist were cutting hay. On our side of the wire, a Finnish family was picking strawberries. They had been evicted from the area occupied by the base, and there I could see their barns, doorless now and windowless, in order to open a line of fire where cattle once stood.

The peasant mother talked to me about the Russians. Occasionally her family was permitted to gather hay in a no man's land between the Russian base and free Finland, working under a guard with enforced silence on both sides. "I feel sorry for those boys," said the mother. "They are peasants, as we are, and they would like to be at home with their own families making their own crops. We want to talk to them and they want to talk to us. But no one can say a word. Don't you think it is sad that human beings have to live like that?" she asked.

She did not mention her own hardships, which were largely of Russian making. There was no complaint in her voice and no defeatism. It was clear that she was all compact of resistance yet without visible hatred. I remember her there, her eyes serenely blue, face resolute, her strong bronzed arms working over her strawberry plants with the affection of those who love the soil.

## 2

A WEEK later I was in Finnish Lapland, beyond the Arctic Circle. This is a land of air strangely light; of trackless wilds, endless forests, bogs where cranes step with slow dignity from one islet of matted vegetation to another, and lakes dotted with wild fowl in summer. Primitive, stark, silent, this is a landscape of the morning time of the earth.

Everywhere in the area moss abounds upon which live reindeer herds numbering 200,000. They wander free summer long in the forests, to be

rounded up in autumn much as our ranchers round up their cattle, each animal carrying on an ear the tiny brand of its owner. The reindeer, whose flesh is destined for the domestic pot and for export largely to Sweden, no longer draw the sleighs through the arctic snow, for the automobile has come to Lapland; but they are the region's principal traffic hazard. One may motor there for miles without seeing man or house, but we had constantly to be on the alert against reindeer that suddenly darted in front of us going from the forests on one side of the road to the forests on the other side.

Here the summer sun does not set for sixty days; whereas January and February are a time of almost unrelieved darkness. Lapland summer is a delirium, a period of urgent, throbbing growth, a delicious madness singing in the blood of men; a compulsive moment for fishing, swimming, boating, walking, lying in the sun, visiting neighbors, no one sleeping more than the bare minimum required to keep the flesh alert. But it is a period, too, for hard work in the fields and on the rivers where floats the timber that is Finland's principal treasure, because in this rigorous climate most men can live only by working as farmers in summer and as lumberjacks in winter.

In the war the Germans destroyed nearly all of Lapland's towns, villages, and farmhouses when they retreated out of the area, their mathematical malice extending even to the forest huts. Yet, by herculean labor, the hard-working Finns being almost as fluent with the axe as the sculptor with clay, Rovaniemi, Lapland's provincial capital, a town of 9000, has already risen from the ashes. Here I found three bookshops for a bookloving people, and a new hotel of modern design, shining clean in keeping with the Finnish passion for cleanliness. The United States flag flew above the hotel entrance; a most welcome sight in that remote place.

One midnight, the sun high, people working in the fields, I came to the new Russo-Finnish frontier. One might easily have passed it without knowing, for here was none of the usual paraphernalia of the frontier: guardhouses, soldiers, flags, conspicuous markings. There were simply three railroad ties lashed by chains to the rails of an abandoned railway, and a tiny sign on a post, reading "Russo-Finnish frontier." In this casual and sinisterly impermanent manner the Soviet colossus had marked the boundary with its tiny neighbor.

In this area were several new houses of Finns who had left Karelia when the Russians seized it. The windowpanes of these houses shone like polished crystal in the midnight sun; their window boxes were bright with flowers, their little yards scrupulously neat. I entered one of them — by then it was two o'clock in the morning — to find the young and buxom housewife swinging a paintbrush, hard at work after a long day of toil, a cradled child beneath her watchful eyes.



Here, obviously, was one of that host of devoted, hard-working Finnish women to whom the nation owes so much. I asked if I might talk with her husband, a lumberjack, and she took me into their bedroom where he lay asleep. Awakened, he greeted me with dignity and good humor, and after we had lit cigarettes and exchanged a few amenities, I asked him why he had built his house on the new frontier so that in the event of war he would be directly in the line of march. "I've built three houses in the past ten years," he said quietly. "If the Russians come, I'll build another."

## 3

On my return to the wooded, islanded capital city of Helsinki, gay with its summer flowers, I continued to look for the spirit of a people who became a sovereign nation only after some seven centuries of subjection to the Swedish and Russian empires. I had already learned something of the obdurate stubbornness of the ordinary Finnish citizen in fighting oppression; of that heady freedom of his which comes only to those who are ready to die for their convictions; of the willingness of Finns to toil as perhaps only Chinese toil in the modern world so that they may lead cleanly, comfortable lives in their austere environment, and praise God for his blessings in their white Lutheran churches hard against the murmuring forests.

"How is it," I asked a high government official, "that you are able to do what the Czechs could not do, although they are far stronger than you are?"

"There are perhaps two principal reasons," he replied. "The first is that many Czech intellectuals deserted their country in time of peril and so deprived their country of much needed leadership. Our intellectuals, on the other hand, stayed right here in Finland. The other reason is this. Certainly the Russians can overrun us. They are 200 million, and we are 4 million. They are also next door to us. But they know, and we know, that if they should try to do it, we would all go to the forests and fight. It would take hundreds of thousands of men to keep us down. And we believe that at this time the Russians don't want that."

A little later I got a glimpse of the Finnish spirit in another of its aspects. I asked Finnish friends what they had done with their small Jewish population when the German Army, with its tens of thousands, came to Finland. Nearly everywhere else the Germans went they demanded, and largely got, the local Jewish population for their gas-extermination chambers or slave labor camps. The Finns were astonished by a question that seemingly

bore no relation to reality, and I had to repeat it. "We did not do anything," one of them said when he had recovered from surprise at my query. "We told the Germans we would not turn over our Jewish citizens to them. Neither would we hide them, nor pass any anti-Semitic laws." Thus it was that although the Germans slaughtered hosts of Jews throughout Europe, in Finland during the war they did not touch the hair of a single Jew.

Courage matched by nobility of spirit, the Finns have taken to heart the injunction of Kivi, their adored novelist: "*And one more thing, set plainly before the eyes of your souls what will be our final victory: we shall be men.*" So doing, their population small, their resources slender, their burdens huge, the odds against them great, they daily stare into the eyes of an unrelenting enemy. But although the Finns have no reason to love the Russians, I heard fewer expressions of hatred toward them during my stay in Finland than one daily hears in the United States. Hate, evidently, is neither a policy, a mode of action, nor a liberating agent, while its constant reiteration, not at all hurtful to the hated, is damaging to the hater. The Finns, then, quite properly devote their energies, not to hating Soviet Russia, but to opposing it on every front, aware apparently of the old American saying that we seem to have forgotten: "The steam that blows the whistle will never turn a wheel."

In all this, their determination is bolstered by the solid realities of their national life. In the brief twenty years from the beginning of their sovereignty until their war with Russia, the Finns had constructed one of the most admirable smaller states of the world; a workable combination of socialism and private enterprise; democratic, highly literate, free of marked extremes of riches and poverty, enterprising in all that pertained to the public welfare, and vigorously expressive of at least two of the arts — music and architecture. Their politico-industrial system had served them well. They were free after seven centuries of servitude to Sweden and Russia. This freedom, the greatest of all gifts, the iron-willed Finns mean to keep or to die in the effort. And by a conjunction of the high heart and the stubborn mind they have retained it and so presented to all who desire to remain free a miracle of the human spirit.

My friends came to see me off on the little Danish ship that was to take me to Copenhagen. "You Finns are absolutely mad," I said, "to carry on as you do against impossible odds."

"Of course we are mad," one of them replied. "We believe that those whom the gods would preserve they first make mad."

**“No Comment”** *Too much national policy is fully formed nowadays before press and public are let in on the facts. By the time the news is out, the great decisions have already been taken. JAMES B. RESTON, diplomatic correspondent of the New York Times, who received the Pulitzer Prize for national correspondence in 1945, calls for earlier action, and more of it, by the Washington reporters. This article gives the substance of the William Allen White Lecture which Mr. Reston delivered recently at the University of Kansas.*

## SECRECY AND THE REPORTER

by JAMES B. RESTON

### 1

THE conflict between officials and reporters in Washington over what information about foreign affairs should be made public is now becoming an important issue. In a country whose action depends upon consent of the people and whose actions now affect the interests of the whole world, an understanding between reporters and officials on the obligations and rights of the reporter is imperative, but no such understanding exists today. Instead, responsible officials and responsible reporters, as distinguished from the old-fashioned scoop-artists, gossipmongers, and saloon-rail journalists, are now playing cops and robbers with each other. The object of the cops seems to be to conceal information. The object of the robbers is to disclose information. Both sides just go on waging their own private little cold war, to the despair of each other and the detriment of the public.

While Secretary of State Acheson does not dislike reporters personally, he apparently thinks they are presumptuous, superficial, often selfish and indifferent to the public interest, irresponsible with secret information, much too distrustful and skeptical of officials, and far too interested in being first with any story rather than being right and careful with what he regards as the main story. The executive branch of the government, he argues, must have the right of uninterrupted private discussion and negotiation among its own officials and with other governments, and until it decides to disclose that information — even if it's about such things as the hydrogen bomb — the reporters have no right to violate the government's privacy and report what's going on. There is a lot in his argument, and it is easy to illustrate.

Several weeks ago, General Omar Bradley accepted an invitation to make a private talk to the members of the Overseas Writers, a group of former foreign correspondents in Washington. In the course of answering questions, the General said

that, speaking as a soldier, he could see advantages to rearming the Germans. Within an hour after the meeting, somebody present reported (and distorted) his remarks to an official of the French embassy. By 5.30 of the same afternoon, a French official was at the State Department, seeking an assurance that the United States was not for rearming the Germans. And within forty-eight hours, General Bradley's views on the rearmament of Germany were being openly discussed in the French press.

The net effect of the incident was that the U.S. government was embarrassed by the indiscretion of an American correspondent, doubts were raised in France about the reliability of U.S. policy in Germany, and General Bradley (and every other official who heard about the incident) was highly skeptical of the value of any off-the-record discussions with reporters.

A similar but even more disturbing incident occurred at the height of the Soviet pressure on Yugoslavia last year. Various highly secret meetings were held in Washington on what action the United States and Britain should take in the event of a Soviet armed attack on Yugoslavia. One reporter published a dispatch several days later saying that the United States and Britain had decided that they would give some aid to Marshal Tito if war broke out but that they definitely would not go to war themselves for him.

This naturally was interpreted by the Yugoslavs as an invitation to the Russians to make war against Yugoslavia, and it was properly condemned in Washington as a dangerous and senseless bit of journalistic enterprise.

It is a matter of opinion why such incidents as these occur, but my own view is that they occur partly because an atmosphere of rivalry, perhaps even of hostility, has grown up between reporters and the sources of official information; partly because the exclusive report of an interesting bit of information is still regarded as a triumph in the

newspaper business, even if the information is more damaging than beneficial; and partly because the old points of contact and coöperation between reporters and officials are breaking down.

In William Allen White's generation, officials in Washington had plenty of time to see correspondents. The Secretary of State in those days could devote weeks and even months to meditation upon the Newfoundland Fisheries problem. The corps of correspondents was small and dependable. When Henry L. Stimson was Secretary of State in the Hoover administration, he held a press conference every day and saw correspondents privately and regularly.

This produced understanding both ways, but it is not possible in 1950. Mr. Acheson has to deal with a press corps that is larger than the Senate and House of Representatives combined. If he sees a correspondent privately once or twice a year, that is about par for the course. He holds his press conferences once a week, but whenever a big story is breaking, the reporters, under pressure to report the facts, cannot see him and can find only with the greatest difficulty somebody — usually in another country's embassy — who can give them reliable information.

Thus the main link between the reporter and the official source of news is broken at the most critical time. The other link, the off-the-record press conference, has broken down for a variety of reasons. When Mr. Acheson or one of his aides thinks about talking off-the-record to the State Department correspondents today, he has to remember that among those correspondents are the representatives of the Soviet news agency, Tass. He has also to remember that organizations such as the Associated Press sometimes consider it a useful information and public relations policy to send a summary of his off-the-record remarks to all member newspapers for the private information of their editors. These private memos give a lot of publishers and editors a sense of being in on things, but they terrify government officials and in the long run make them hesitant to say anything to any large group off-the-record.

Even the meetings between top government officials and small groups of, say, ten or twelve dependable correspondents are breaking down, not because the correspondents have misused or betrayed the information given them in these meetings but because government officials have less and less time, and — as the cold war gets hotter — are more and more afraid that they'll be blamed for saying something that some other official thinks they shouldn't have said.

We must be fair to the officials about this. Their problems are varied and perplexing. The government of course must protect its right to private discussions and private negotiations. The consequences of premature disclosure in certain negotia-

tions can be serious. The reporters of the Soviet government; the American correspondents who would rather be first than be right; the peephole journalists, who have transferred their talents and their mass audiences from obstetrics to politics without any period of gestation — all these are problems.

But the people have to be adequately informed in a democracy in spite of these problems, and the government is not doing what it could to keep informing them. The more complex our problems become, the more dangerous they become, then the more they must be explained to the people; but the opposite procedure now prevails. The fireside chat — that most useful educational contact between the President and the people — ended just when issues began to get really confused; that is to say, precisely when it was needed the most. As the crises in Germany and in the Far East have become more complex, the official sources of information on these subjects have not opened up, but have tended to close down.

## 2

LET me illustrate the public's side of this problem. The government's handling of its public relations on Formosa and the Far East is an illustration of how inadequate coöperation between responsible reporters and responsible officials can contribute to public confusion, violent controversy, and a fear at home and abroad that the giant doesn't quite know how to use his strength.

Officials at the State Department had every opportunity to explain their Far Eastern policy late in 1949 but they did not do so. They complained constantly that their policy was being misrepresented, and they promised to make available summaries of that policy before Christmas of 1949, but they never did. Nor did they say anything else to explain U.S. policy in that part of the world.

As a result, when Senators Knowland of California and Smith of New Jersey came back from the Far East shouting about the doom of Formosa and its importance to the U.S., the public had little basis for judgment on the rights or wrongs of their charges. An angry debate ensued, and Mr. Acheson finally had to jump into it with the complaint that things were getting out of hand.

Even after the decision was made by President Truman in the National Security Council that the U.S. was not going to send troops or military missions to Formosa, it was not announced. The argument was allowed to go on for another week before the President let the people know that he had settled the issue.

Finally, when it was decided to make a major statement on U.S. policy on the Far East, how was it made? In a national broadcast which could be heard by the people? In a careful state document



which could serve as a guide for the future? It was made in an extemporaneous address at 1.30 one Thursday afternoon to the National Press Club because Mr. Acheson had promised the retiring president of that club that he'd make a speech one day before the club president retired.

I happen to believe that our policy on Formosa was right, given the conditions in January, 1950. I also happen to think that Dean Acheson is incomparably the ablest Secretary of State the United States has had since Henry L. Stimson; but on this question of public information, no contemporary public official has contrived to do so little with so much. Even when he did explain his Far Eastern policy, what did he say? He said that the Russians were "detaching" the four northern provinces from China and "attaching" them to the Soviet Union (which wasn't quite true). He based his whole Formosa policy of noninterference on the thesis that the Chinese were inevitably going to react against the Soviet Union, and that we should not, by going into Formosa, deflect China's wrath from the Russians to ourselves. But all this had been true for years. The Russians did not suddenly go into the northern provinces of China. They were there last year, and if the State Department had made its policy clear about China and Formosa then, much of the divisive argument of late 1949 and early 1950 might have been avoided.

### 3

NOTHING in recent years in Washington has produced quite so much controversy in the field of what should and should not be published as the hydrogen bomb. President Truman was opposed to any public discussion of the bomb or his interest in it. If he had had his way, nothing would have been said in public at all: he would merely have ordered the bomb built, like any other weapon, with no announcement, no discussion, no debate about the responsibilities of American power or the international control of atomic energy.

It's a good idea not to be dogmatic about this particular case. Very few reporters would be prepared to argue that they had the right to disclose information about powerful new American weapons. Several unusual facts, however, are relevant.

First, it was not a reporter who let out this particular cat. As early as December, 1946, when John J. McCloy was Assistant Secretary of War, he discussed publicly the possibility of producing a hydrogen bomb 1000 times as powerful as the Nagasaki bomb. P. M. S. Blackett, the British physicist, discussed the super-bomb in a book in 1948, and Senator Johnson of Colorado discussed it in a television broadcast last November 1.

"Our scientists," he said, "have already created a bomb that has six times the effectiveness of the bomb that was dropped at Nagasaki and they are

not satisfied at all. They want one that has 1000 times the effect of that terrible bomb that was dropped at Nagasaki that snuffed out the lives of 50,000 people. . . . They have been devoting their time to two things: one to make a super-bomb; and the other to find some way of detonating a bomb before the fellow who wants to drop it can detonate it. We have made considerable progress in that direction."

This extraordinary statement by a member of the Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Committee was naturally reported in the press. Al Friendly of the *Washington Post*, hearing about the broadcast, got hold of the text and printed what Senator Johnson said. The Alsop brothers followed with three columns on the difficult decision facing the President. And the *New York Times* then published a series of articles on the scientific aspects of hydrogen fusion, and the political and military questions raised within the Administration prior to the President's decision to order production of the bomb.

During the preliminary debate within the Administration, some of the men who knew most about the possibilities of the H-bomb took the position that this was not really a weapon of war alone but a means of exterminating whole populations. To treat it merely as a military secret which raised no new political and moral questions seemed to them an extraordinary procedure, and some of them said so at the time.

These facts raise the question of the newspaper's rights and obligations in its most difficult form. Who is to decide whether the information should be published? What is to be the basis of judgment? Is military security alone to be the test? If the President is to be the sole judge, is he free to exert this right indiscriminately, say, to cover up shortcomings or divisions within his own Administration?

I find it difficult to be as positive in answering these questions as the President is. His attitude is that he must be trusted to decide such things without interference or pressure from the outside. I don't know what he expected the papers to do about Senator Johnson's broadcast, but apparently we were supposed to ignore it, and all the arguments within the government that followed. There was, however, one aspect of the situation that could not be ignored. In the middle of the debate, before the President made his decision about the H-bomb, President James B. Conant of Harvard University publicly charged that the Administration had not yet devised "even the first approximation to a satisfactory procedure for evaluating technical judgments on matters connected with the national defense."

Mr. Conant was on the original Acheson-Lilienthal Committee that studied the question of controlling atomic energy. He was an adviser to the Atomic Energy Commission and he could



scarcely be characterized as a frivolous man. Yet here he was publicly discussing how to solve the very differences at issue on the H-bomb and asserting: "The simple fact is that many important decisions are being made in Washington today without adequate evaluation. . . . To my mind we have not yet evolved a satisfactory procedure for evaluating differences of opinion among technical experts."

This was in some ways the most disturbing statement made during the entire debate, for while the President was crying for more secrecy, some of his most illustrious and best-informed associates were pointing out the Conant speech to reporters as the real truth of the situation within the government. In these circumstances, was there an obligation to publish, or was this to be kept out of the papers too? And if so, what is the end of such a process in a democracy?

What is particularly disturbing about this problem is that the same demands for secrecy are made on less important issues as well, so that when a really big issue comes up, it is difficult for the government to make a serious new argument.

There should, of course, be some means by which the responsible reporter and the responsible official could discuss, in private and with mutual confidence, the implications of the President's dilemma over the H-bomb. But it is precisely this lack of mutual confidence which is the problem.

In these circumstances the least we in the newspaper business can do is to try to analyze our own faults and try to correct them, but this will not be done, I suggest, by adopting softer standards of reporting. The power of the government is growing all the time and our skepticism will have to grow with it. The power of the executive to decide issues in the secret stage of negotiations with other nations is growing all the time and this, I fear, is going to impose new obligations on reporters and probably bring them even more into conflict with officials than in the past.

What the United States does now in the realm of foreign affairs is almost always done as part of a coalition. When it negotiates agreements in secret, the theory is that the agreement will always be subject to review by Congress, but the power of review isn't what it used to be.

We no longer have a government of "equal powers" in the field of foreign affairs, if we ever did have. The Congress retains all its powers over the purse and it still has the right of review, but the President and the Secretary of State in the executive branch are now more than ever before in a position to call the turn. When the President announces to the world that he wants aid for Greece, the Congress does not really have complete freedom of action; it can only go along with him or repudiate and humiliate him — and it will always hesitate to do the latter. The Congress theoretic-

cally could refuse to vote the funds to build the hydrogen bomb, but once the executive branch of the government announced that the bomb effort was going to be made, the Congress had very little practical choice but to go along.

This is an increasing and an important trend, for almost everything the United States does in the field of foreign affairs is now done in collaboration with other nations. Thus the executive is always coming to the Congress with a policy in one hand and a reminder in the other that any major change by Congress would embarrass the United States in its relations with other countries.

It seems to me, if public opinion is to retain anything but the power of protest after the event, the reporter has to move into action much earlier in the development of policy than formerly. The State Department would like to keep him out of the picture until the basis of an agreement is reached with other countries and the tentative agreement is sent to Capitol Hill; but by then policy has crystallized so much that aggressive reporting of the facts could in some instances upset a whole series of applecarts.

It should not be impossible, at some point in most of our negotiations before informal commitments are taken, for our government to indicate the broad lines of the policy it favors, so that there can be some objective discussion of the facts in public. But if the government will not make an effort to try to inform the people, then I think it is the reporter's duty to do the best he can to inform them, and the newspaper's duty to see that the reporter is given time out from routine coverage of the news to do so.

I have wondered what a good reporter and philosopher like William Allen White would say about this problem if he came to Washington once more. He was a courteous man, but I think if he sat in on our State Department press conferences today he would feel, not that the reporters were pressing too hard, but that they had become a little too courteous, that there were not enough chips on enough shoulders. I think he would want to know why the papers had assigned just a handful of their large corps of Washington reporters to probe into these life-and-death questions of atomic energy, the organization of the armed services, the conduct of our foreign policy, and the personalities and characters of the men involved.

As a matter of fact I think he would rather enjoy the game of cops and robbers in Washington and think it was inevitable and healthy. I imagine he would tell us that officials in Washington or Emporia, Kansas, had always sought to hide as much information as possible, especially when they did not quite know where they were going, and that one of the necessary antidotes to this very human procedure was for brash young men to ask sticky questions and keep using their legs.



"At the time I began to write," says EDITH SITWELL, "a change in the direction, imagery, and rhythms in poetry had become necessary, owing to the rhythmical flaccidity, the verbal deadness, the dead and expected patterns, of some of the poetry immediately preceding us." In *The Canticle of the Rose, Poems: 1917 to 1949*, we see the development of England's foremost woman poet. We feel the excitement of her early poems with their strange compelling rhythm, of which "Facade" is the perfect example, and we feel the power and penetration of her later work with its splendid sweep and color. On her visit to America last year, Dr. Sitwell showed the Atlantic her Notebook on William Shakespeare, from which we have drawn two papers, the first on Macbeth, the second on King Lear — each remarkable for its interpretation and scholarship.

## "MACBETH"

by EDITH SITWELL

### I

IN Shakespeare, "all is indiscriminately stamped with grandeur," as Fuseli said of Michelangelo — the beating of these greater hearts, the pulse of this vaster humanity, seems energised by the rhythms, which are like the active principles of which Newton wrote.

At moments, in the very sound of the verse or prose, is heard the tread of Doom; the beating of Macbeth's heart changes, suddenly, to the knock of Fate's hand upon the door, in the passage where the Porter hears the Damned knocking at the gate of Hell.

The events in the life of a character, as well as the personality, even the appearance of Shakespeare's men and women, are suggested by the texture, the movement of the lines. In *Macbeth* we find, over and over again, schemes of tuneless dropping dissonances: —

#### FIRST WITCH

When shall we three meet again?  
In thunder, lightning, or in raine?

#### SECOND WITCH

When the hurly-burly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.

#### THIRD WITCH

That will be ere set of Sun.

#### FIRST WITCH

Where the place?

#### SECOND WITCH

Upon the heath.

#### THIRD WITCH

There to meet with Macbeth (I, 1).

"Done" is a dropping dissonance to "raine," "heath" to the second syllable of "Macbeth," and these untuned, dropping dissonances, falling from the mouths of the three Fates degraded into the shapes of filthy hags, have a prophetic and terrible significance. — So do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, slow step by step, descend into Hell.

Has not Macbeth himself brought the hags into being? . . . The first speech of these three Fates ends thus: —

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:  
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

The first words spoken by Macbeth are, as Bradley has pointed out, nearly an echo of this: —

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

But that great critic omitted to call attention to the fact that sometimes the Apparitions' voices sound with the very tone of Lady Macbeth's voice: —

Be bloody, bold, and resolute.

Might this not have come from the lips of Macbeth's loving Fury? And does not Lady Macbeth, herself, apostrophising her absent husband, say: —

Hie thee hither,  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear.

Here, as is usual with Shakespeare, a phrase does not bear its obvious meaning alone.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has said "the whole play, as it were a dark corridor of Inverness Castle, resounds with . . . echoes."

These echoes fall because Time, as has been

pointed out by the two distinguished poets and critics Mr. Stephen Spender and Mr. Mark Van Doren, working independently and from quite different points of view, "has become inoperative," no longer means anything. Mr. Spender says:—

"In the minds of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth there are, after the prophetic meeting with the weird sisters, three kinds of time: the time before the murder of Macbeth, the time of the murder of Duncan, and the enjoyable time afterwards, when they reap the fruits of the murder. Their problem is to keep these times separate, and not to allow them to affect each other."

Quoting Macbeth's soliloquy before the murder,

If it were done — when 'tis done — then 'twere well  
It were done quickly: if the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease, success: that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here upon this bank and shoal of time  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these Cases  
We still have judgement here: that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague the inventor (I, 7),

Mr. Spender remarks: "Macbeth certainly has good reason to fear even-handed justice. . . .

"The real fear is far more terrible. It is a fear of the extension into infinity of the instant in which he commits the murder. The bank and shoal of time is time that has stood still; beyond it lies the abyss of a timeless moment."

Later, Mr. Spender refers to Lady Macbeth's

. . . Nor time, nor place,  
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.  
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now  
Does unmake you (I, 7).

In this, I see that Time and Place have become active principles, — a part of Destiny.

This illuminated criticism explains, of course, both Lady Macbeth's insistence on the hour in the sleep-walking scene, and the repetition in a speech of Macbeth's — the perpetual return to

Shall sleepe no more.

The words of Banquo to the witches:—

If you can look into the seeds of Time,  
And say which grains will grow and which will not,

"plant early in the play," says Mr. Van Doren, "a conception of time as something which fulfils itself by growing — and which, the season being wrong, can swell to monstrous shape. . . . Duncan welcomes Macbeth to Forres with the words

I have begun to plant thee, and will labour  
To make thee full of growing.

"But Macbeth, like Time itself, will burgeon beyond all bounds."

I think it means this — but has, also, another meaning. We plant our death in the man who will be the means of it. Not only his deformity, but the looks and taunts of his fellow men planted evil in the nature of Richard the Third. As for Edmund — such speeches as that made by his father to Kent were responsible for his nature.

Perhaps the good Duncan had planted ambition — which was to be the cause of his own death — in Macbeth.

## 2

IN THIS vast world torn from the universe of night, there are three tragic themes. The first theme is that of the actual guilt, and the separation in damnation of the two characters — the man who, in spite of his guilt, walks the road of the spirit, and who loves the light that has forsaken him — and the woman who, after her invocation to the "Spirits who tend on mortall thoughts," walks in the material world, and who does not know that light exists, until she is nearing her end and must seek the comfort of one small taper to illumine all the murkiness of Hell.

The second tragic theme of the play is the man's love for the woman whose damnation is of the earth, who is unable, until death is near, to conceive of the damnation of the spirit, and who in her blindness therefore strays away from him, leaving him for ever in his lonely hell.

The third tragic theme is the woman's despairing love for the man whose vision she cannot see, and whom she has helped to drive into damnation.

The very voices of these two damned souls have therefore a different sound. His voice is like that of some gigantic being in torment — of a lion with a human soul. In her speech invoking darkness, the actual sound is so murky and thick that the lines seem impervious to light, and, at times, rusty, as though they had lain in the blood that had been spilt, or in some hell-born dew. There is no escape from what we have done. The past will return to confront us. And that is even shown in the verse. In that invocation, there are perpetual echoes, sometimes far removed from each other, sometimes placed close together.

For instance, in the line

And fill me from the Crowne to the Toe, top-full

"full" is a darkened dissonance to "fill" — and these dissonances, put at opposite ends of the line, — together with the particular placing of the alliterative *f*'s of "fill" and "full" and the alliterative *t*'s, and the rocking up and down of the dissonantal *o*'s ("Crowne," "Toe," "top") show us a mind reeling on the brink of madness, about to topple down into those depths, yet striving to retain its balance.

Let us examine the passage for a moment. The



manner in which the stressed assonances are placed is largely responsible for the movement, and the texture is extremely variable — murky always, excepting for those few flares from the fires of Hell, but varying in the thickness of that murk.

The Raven himselfe is hoarse  
That croakes the fatall entrance of Duncane  
Under my Battlements. Come, you Spirits  
That tend on mortall thoughts! unsex me here,  
And fill me from the Crowne to the Toe, top-full  
Of direst Cruelty! Make thicke my blood;  
Stop up the accesse and passage to Remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of Nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keepe peace betweene  
The effect and it. Come to my Woman's Brests,  
And taky my Milke for Gall, you murdering Ministers,  
Where-ever in your sightlesse substances  
You waite on Nature's Mischiefe. Come, thicke Night,  
And pall thee in the dunnest smoake of Hell,  
That my keene knife see not the Wound it makes,  
Nor Heaven peepe through the Blanket of the darke  
To cry Hold, Hold.

Throughout the whole of this speech, an untuned and terrible effect is produced by these discordant, dissonantal *o*'s, used outwardly and in the lines — “hoarse” echoed by “croakes” (I am assuming, from the evidence of other words, that the *oa* of “croakes” was then pronounced as an assonance to the “oar” of “hoarse”) — these thickening to “come,” darkening again to “mortall thoughts” and then — supreme example — making the line rock up and down, and finally topple over, in

And fill me from the Crowne to the Toe, top-full.

“Blood,” “Stop,” “Remorse,” “Come,” — each of these dissonantal *o*'s has a different height or depth, a different length or choked shortness. There is a fabric, too, of dull and rusty vowels, thickened *m*'s, and unshaping *s*'s — these latter are unshaping because they are placed close together, and so deprive the line of form, to some extent, as in

Stop up the accesse and passage to Remorse  
That no compunctious visitings of Nature

or

Where-ever in your sightlesse substances.

Throughout the passage, the consonants are for ever thickening and then thinning again — perhaps as the will hardens and then, momentarily, dissolves. In the lines

That croakes the fatall entrance of Duncane  
Under my Battlements. Come, you Spirits

“Come” is a thickened, darkened assonance (almost a dissonance) to the “Dun” of Duncane and of the first syllable of “Under.” And in the line

That no compunctious visitings of Nature

the first syllable of “compunctious” is a kind of darkened thickened reverberation of the word “Come” (darkened or thickened because what fol-

lows throws a shade backward); the second syllable is a thickened echo of the first syllable of “Duncane.”

As the giant shuttles of Fate weave, closing and opening, so do the lines of this speech seem to close and open, and to change their length. But this change is in appearance only, and not real. By this I mean that there are no extra syllables to the line. The apparent change is due to the lightening and lengthening of the vowel sounds. For though, as I have said already, the words are frequently dull and rusty in this passage, at times they stretch out into a harsh shriek, which sometimes is sustained, sometimes broken, — as with the broken echoes “Raven,” “fatall.”

### 3

SOMETIMES the particular placing of the assonances produces a sound like that of a fevered, uneven pulse, — an example is the effect brought about by the drumming of the dull *un . . . om* sounds in

. . . Duncane  
Under my Battlements. Come.

This terrible drumming sound is heard over and over again, throughout the passage, and is due not only to the placing of the assonances, but also to the particular placing of double-syllabled and — (this has a still stronger effect) — treble-syllabled words and quick-moving unaccented one-syllabled words.

This march towards Hell is slow, and has a thunderous darkened pomp. It is slow, and yet it has but few pauses (for that march is of her own will, she is driven by that will as by a Fury) and these pauses are not long, but deep, like fissures opening down into Hell. There is, however, a stretching pause after the word “Gall.”

In the Second Scene of Act Two, while the sleeping King is being sent to his death, Lady Macbeth's voice has a different tone: —

That which hath made them drunke hath made me bold,  
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.

Hearke!

Peace!

It was the Owle that shriek'd, the fatall Bell-man,  
Which gives the stern'st good-night.

Here we actually feel the silence of the night, broken by that long flame of a voice, like a torch held by a Fury before the destruction of a world is begun. That voice, pausing, as it seems, for ever on the long sound of “Peace” (a word that has the high doom-haunted tone of the owl's shriek), echoes, in a straight line, down all the corridors of the Dead.

The dark and terrible voice of Macbeth is not covered by a blood-dewed rust, is not like a black and impenetrable smoke from Hell, or the torch of a Fury — as is the voice of the woman who, to him, is Fate. It is hollow like the depths into which he has

fallen, it returns ever (though it, too, has discordances) to one note, dark as the Hell through which he walks with that sleepless soul. The sound is ever "No more."

Cawdor

Shall sleepe no more, Macbeth shall sleepe no more.

As with Lady Macbeth's speech quoted above, the magnificence is largely brought about and controlled by the particular places in which the alliterations and assonances are placed (though in the two speeches they are used completely differently, and have an entirely different effect).

MACBETH

Me thought I heard a voyce cry 'Sleepe no more,'  
Macbeth does murther Sleepe, the innocent Sleepe,  
Sleepe that knits up the ravell'd sleave of Care,  
The death of each daye's Life; sore Labor's Bath,  
Balme of hurte mindes, Great Nature's second Course,  
Chiefe Nourisher in Life's Feast —

LADY MACBETH

What doe you meane?

MACBETH

Still it cry'd 'Sleepe no more'! to all the house:  
Glamis hath murther'd Sleepe, and therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleepe no more, Macbeth shall sleepe no more.

Twice, a word shudders in that dark voice. The first time, it is the word "innocent" — that word which must henceforth fly in terror from the voice that uttered it, — but that will yet sound again from those guilty lips, bringing with it a renewed agony of soul.

Sometimes an awe-inspiring, drum-beating sound is heard. Once it is slow, and is caused by placing alliterative *b*'s, with near-asonantal vowel-sounds — "Bath," "Balme" — (these being pronounced at that time "Bawth," "Baulme") — at the end of one line and the beginning of the next. (There is a strong pause between these words.) These dark *a*'s are not an exact assonance, because of the difference in thickness between the *th* and the *lme*. Then, for a second time, two *a* sounds are placed together, "Great Nature's," and here the beat is less emphatic; there is no pause between the sounds.

But above all, the quickened beat of a terror-stricken heart is heard, in "therefore Cawdor" — "fore" being a darkened dissonance to "there," and the two other syllables being as nearly as possible assonances to "fore," to "Balme" and to "Bath," though all have different degrees of darkness.

This is followed by the long, stately, and inexorable march of Doom: —

Shall sleepe no more, Macbeth shall sleepe no more.

It is in this scene that we first become aware of the different paths of damnation, — the path of the spirit that sees not all great Neptune's ocean will

wash his hand clear of blood, — and that of the earth-bound Fate who, until she is near her end, dreams that

A little water cleares us of this deede,

and who, when the voice cries

Cawdor

Shall sleepe no more, Macbeth shall sleepe no more,

hears only the small voice of the cricket — or a dark, but yet human voice: —

MACBETH

I have done the deed. Didst thou not heare a noyse?

LADY MACBETH

I heard the Owle screame, and the Crickets cry.  
Did you not speake?

MACBETH

When?

LADY MACBETH

Now.

MACBETH

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH

Aye.

MACBETH

Hearke!  
Who lyes i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbaine.

"Did you not speake? . . ." Often, in this drama, Fate takes to herself, and uses, the voice of one of the protagonists. . . . And, as Macbeth must hear the voices of the three Sisters and the Apparitions speaking through the lips of his wife, and her voice through theirs — ("Be bloody, bold, and resolute." Who spoke those words: "who was it thus that cry'd?" as Lady Macbeth asked) — so, here, in the words "As I descended?" it may well be that the descent was into Hell, and that his doom spoke through his *unknowing lips*.

Doom and he were one.

#### 4

FROM now onward, only blood, and the road that he must tread, exist for Macbeth in the tangible world.

Who lyes i' the second chamber?

. . . Who must be the next to fall under his blood-stained hands, upon that road? . . . But to Lady Macbeth, he is speaking, not of a grave that must be dug, and of a man about to die, but of one sleeping in his bed — Donalbain.

Here, then, in these few lines, the two guilt-stricken souls say farewell, for ever. The immense

pause after Lady Macbeth's "Aye" is a gap in time, like the immense gap between the Ice Age and the Stone Age, wherein, as Science tells us, "the previously existing inhabitants of the earth were almost wholly destroyed, and a different class of inhabitants created." — On the other side of that gap in time, Macbeth rises as the new inhabitant of a changed world — and alone in the universe of eternal night, although the voice of Lady Macbeth, his Fate, his loving Fury, still drives him onward.

Here we have one stupendous use of the pause. After the words that follow Lady Macbeth's "Donalbaine," Macbeth looks at his hands.

MACBETH

This is a sorry sight.

The four beats falling upon the silence before Lady Macbeth speaks again, seem like the sound of blood dropping, slowly, from those hands: —

What hands are here! Hah! they plucke out mine Eyes.

Those hands are the hands of Murder. They are no longer the hands of the living man who was once Macbeth — hands made to caress with, hands made to open windows on to the sun and air, hands made to lift the life-giving food to the mouth. Those hands have now given him darkness for ever — a darkness surrounded by a terrible and all-seeing light, that mars every action, and that yet has no part in him. And yet these beings, and those who surround them, speak ever of the light.

Though these souls are separated for ever, yet sometimes the appalling necessities arising from their crime leash them together for a moment . . . as in the scene (Act III, Scene 1) where, with a sort of crouching, horror-inspiring quietness, like that of a tiger about to lap blood, Macbeth says: —

Heere's our chiefe Guest.

And, stretching beyond him, straining even more eagerly towards the doomed Banquo, Lady Macbeth continues: —

If he had beene forgotten,  
It had beene as a gap in our great Feast  
And all-thing unbecomming

— the sound of the word "forgotten" being like that of a beast lapping.

Macbeth then says: —

To-night we hold a solemne Supper, sir,  
And Ile request your presence.

(Here, as always, drawing down his own doom upon himself.)

Banquo murmurs: —

. . . Let your Highness  
Command upon me; to the which, my duties  
Are with a most indissoluble tye  
For ever knit.

. . . That tie is the shedding of his own blood. From the moment of his death he is indeed knit to Macbeth, — he is a part of his Hell.

So did Iago say to Othello: —

I am your owne for ever.

But here, the victim is speaking to the slayer.

When we come to the scene where the ghost of Banquo keeps his tryst, we shall hear again the terror-maddened drum-beat of Macbeth's heart: —

MACBETH

Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee:  
Thy bones are marrowlesse, thy blood is cold:  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with.

LADY MACBETH

Thinke of this, good Peeres,  
But as a thing of Custome: Tis no other,  
Only it spoyles the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH

What man dare, I dare:  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian Beare,  
The arm'd Rhinoceros, or the Hircan Tiger,  
Take any shape but that, and my firm Nerves  
Shall never tremble. Or be alive againe,  
And dare me to the Desart with thy Sword,  
— If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
The Baby of a Girle. Hence, horrible shadow,  
Unreall mockery, hence!

Why so, being gone  
I am a man againe. Pray you, sit still.

In these lines, the terror-stricken heart-beat is produced, as before, by the varying use of alliteration of assonances and near-asonances placed close together within the lines: "firm," "Nerves," "never tremble," "rugged Russian," "Take any shape." The feeling of unendurably tautened, sharpened nerves is produced by the particular use of vowels that are tuned just above the pitch of almost identical vowels in the preceding word: "Hircan Tiger," for instance. The change from "firm Nerves" to the higher discordances of "Hircan Tiger" is another example. "Sight" is a rising dissonance to "quit," — rising as terror rises. "Hide" is an assonance to "sight" but is longer because of the *d*. Further on in the passage, there are the dissonances "Girle," "Unreall" — (the latter being, as it were, a crumbling shadow of the sound of "Girle") — and the rising dissonances "gone," "againe." All these general discordances add to the impression of a nature alternately sharpened and untuned by fear.

In the last line: —

I am a man againe. Pray you, sit still,

the doom-haunted man has lost even the sound of his own heart-beat. There is no pulse to be heard. There is practically no shape in that line, excepting

that given by the caesura, which in this case is a chasm dividing the line. . . .

For it seems as if all the blood had fled from the heart of Macbeth, to join the blood that had been shed. Blood will haunt his spirit for ever, but will leave the veins like that "most ghastly thing in Nature," the bed of the ocean from which the ocean has fled.

## 5

AFTER this scene, the gulf separating the two beings is impassable. Not only the change of the world in which they live, but the whole depth of the soul, separates them. They are divided in all but love. . . . She will love him for ever: but he has gone beyond love.

He asks her: —

What of the night?

and she replies: —

Almost at oddes with morning, which is which.

Here, I think, Macbeth is asking if the night is blacker for this fresh crime. But Lady Macbeth is speaking of the physical universe.

Macbeth then utters these words: —

How sayst thou, that Macduff denies his person  
At our great bidding?

He is speaking to the invisible beings who now, with the past and future victims of his guilt, alone inhabit his world. His wife, surprised by the question, replies: —

Did you send to him, Sir?

And Macbeth, from his polar solitude, answers this being of another universe, who is separated from him by the whole darkness of her spiritual blindness: —

I heare it by the way: but I will send (III, 5).

From that moment, I think that the appearance of Macbeth must have inspired terror, as if he were no longer a mortal man, but one of those giant comets whom Pliny named Crinatae, "shaggy with bloody locks . . . having the appearance of a fleece surmounted with a kind of crown, — or one that prognosticates high winds and great heat . . . they are also visible in the winter months, and about the South Pole, but they have no rays proceeding from them."

And Lady Macbeth — how changed is she, in that pitiful scene when she who had cried to "thicke Night" to envelop the world and her soul, she who had rejected light, seeks the comfort of one little taper, — the small candle-flame of her soul, to

light all the murkiness of Hell. Yet still, in the lonely mutterings of one who must walk through Hell alone, save for the phantom of Macbeth, we hear that indomitable will that pushed him to his doom, rising once more in the vain hope that she may shield and guide him.

There is, in these two beings, the faithfulness of the Lion and his mate. It is not their fault that never more can she be his companion.

Again, there will come one of those reminiscent whispers — the words of Macbeth when he hears of her death. . . .

Out, out, brief candle. . . .

And we see again that lonely being, wandering through Hell with the help of one small light. But to Macbeth, the weak light of the candle was not to be treasured, as a hope in the midst of the increasing darkness.

Macbeth, like that lonely sleep-walker, had changed. That change began when he, alone, heard the voice that cried "Macbeth hath murdered Sleepe," — and knew that he was alone for ever. He, who, in the midst of the darkness in that universe his soul, could yet love the light, is about to turn from it, for he must undergo the Mesozoic Age, the Age of Stone: —

I gin to be aweary of the Sunne.

The words

She should have dy'd hereafter;

There would have beene a time for such a word:

in their very quietness, their slowness, seem tears shed in the soul by those lidless eyes, an oblation, the wasting of a rock or glacier by water-dropping, by melting.

Those two beings have passed even from the darkness of a world in which it was possible to ask: —

Is it Night's predominance, or the Daye's shame,  
That darknesse doth the face of Earth intombe,  
When living Light should kiss it? (II, 2)

— a darkness of which they have become so much natives that night and day are one: —

MACBETH

What of the night?

LADY MACBETH

Almost at oddes with morning, which is which —

but that yet is illumined by the vision of a lost heaven — a heaven that lives yet in spite of their fall: —

Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.





*As early as 1690, Cotton Mather looked back longingly at "The Golden Age of New England," and from that day to this the lamentation has never ceased. John Lowell, Jr., struck a more realistic note when in 1835 he wrote: "The prosperity of my native land New England which is sterile and unproductive must depend hereafter as it has heretofore depended first on the moral qualities and secondly on the intelligence and information of its inhabitants." At a recent meeting of the American Historical Association in Boston, two members of the Harvard faculty, OSCAR HANDLIN and HOWARD MUMFORD JONES, took opposite sides in a debate on the question "Is New England Withering?"*

## THE WITHERING OF NEW ENGLAND

### THE PROPHETS OF GLOOM

by OSCAR HANDLIN

WHEN Van Wyck Brooks, having followed New England through its flowering and Indian summer, approached its most recent season, he abandoned the task of chronicling its cultural history. Apparently the section had entered upon a dreary winter not worthy of his descriptive powers.

Mr. Brooks has not been alone in the judgment that the best days are over; a wealth of opinion seems to support the conclusion that the Yankee states are indeed withering. Through the seventy-year span between 1870 and 1940 voice after voice grieved for New England; even those who loved her most, in celebrating her past glories, emphasized the fact that they were past, masochistically described the decay of the section.

But what is puzzling about this unanimity of opinion is its depth in time. Apparently, whatever the fate of other prophets, the prophets of gloom were always honored in New England. Go back to Boston of 1836, on the very eve of the great flowering, and listen to William Ellery Channing: "We are a city too much given to croaking. I have been told that we were on the brink of ruin ever since I knew the place. Those whose duty it is to carry forward society despair of it. They despair of the body of the people, despair of our institutions, despair of liberty through the world. I lament our want of faith in human improvement." Remember back further, that a governor of Massachusetts in the 1790's doubted that its free institutions would last out the decade. Back still further, Cotton Mather, troubled by the evils of the times, expressed concern over the declension of New England. And already in the 1650's Bradford bemoaned the coming of the mixed multitudes who had adulterated the primal purity of the New Canaan.

Such concern has been a constant in the history of the section. And that wants accounting for.

I see in this frame of mind a reflection of the common situation of the people of New England, of the unpromising location and unyielding soil which imposed the necessity of unremitting struggle upon the people who perversely chose to live there. For those compelled ever to fight for their precarious hold, even the magnitude of their achievements was often overshadowed by the bitterness of the battle.

The arduous nature of the contest against the unfriendly elements of the environment can be traced in the familiar story of the New England economy of the early nineteenth century. Back-breaking farming, commerce pursued under the competitive disadvantage of absence of a fertile back country and of inadequate transportation links to the interior, industry that operated without ready access to raw materials and with quickly antiquated sources of power — these were then the dominant characteristics of the region's system of production. Yet despite these adverse conditions, there were brilliant attempts to resolve them — Merino sheep, the China trade, the clipper ships, the Lowell mills.

That same reaction to an unfavorable situation was also evident in other fields. The dwindling political importance of the section nationally, for instance, was compensated for by the tactical achievements of its statesmen. (I think I could make a case also for the relevance of these difficult conditions to the cultural developments of the 1840's and 1850's.)

If therefore the achievements of the seventy years after 1870 are less impressive, that is not due to the greater difficulty of the region's problems. It is true that New England spent lavishly of its youth in the trial of Civil War, and thereafter continued to contribute from its meager resources to the upbuilding of the West. But comparable losses in manpower

had also been characteristic of the Revolutionary period and earlier—witness the Yankee farms in the Mohawk Valley and to the westward, the Yankee merchants in all the Atlantic seaports.

The complaints of degeneration since 1870 have been no different from those heard in the land in the two centuries previous. New England's troubles are the same; what is different is the failure to cope with them. In transportation, in commerce, in industry, a succession of missed opportunities marks the course of these seven decades. Against obstacles there might have been a thriving trunk line railroad to the west, the Cunarders might have continued to come to Boston, an automobile center might have developed in Duryea's Springfield. The political importance of the section continued to dwindle, but there were no countervailing statesmen of national importance; there was, as well, a marked decline in the effectiveness of local government. Finally, the most sensitive New England intellectuals of this period were those who left it, men who felt no compulsion to confront and grapple with its problems, but rather preferred to stand off and escape them.

There, I think, is the heart of our problem. The same unfavorable situation which once had been a goad to effective action has become the occasion for a kind of withdrawal, a withdrawal which characteristically often took the form of a flight to the past, but which in any case represented an unwillingness to look upon the realities of the present. Our primary task is to explain the nature of this loss of nerve.

## 2

IT IS no coincidence that the change should have come just after the middle of the century, just after the great waves of the migration from across the Atlantic and from across the northern border injected altogether new elements into the New England scene. These waves which, in other parts of the country, were so stimulating in their effect, here had the most disruptive consequences.

For what is this *here*, this New England of which we speak? We are concerned not simply with a physiographic region, with a geographical section, but with a community; and in this community, immigration was disruptive because it left a deep chasm across which the old and the new elements of the population could rarely cross hands.

The sense of shock as that chasm deepened in New England society accounts, I think, in good measure for the withdrawal to which I have referred. The insecurity of men suddenly surrounded, as it were, by strangers led to a new preoccupation with family life, to an intense need for strengthening family ties among those long settled here. This can be measured in the low rate of divorce, in the growing interest in genealogy, in the concern with questions of ancestry, and in the development of hereditary societies.

The effects of the same preoccupation can be seen in the development in Massachusetts of the Boston Trust, a device for limiting the access of individual heirs to their family fortunes, with the intention, as a prominent lawyer put it, of "providing restraints against alien ideas which might be incompatible with the cherished stability of family standing and dominance." By 1934, of the estates of more than \$25,000 probated in the four eastern counties of Massachusetts, almost 70 per cent (in value) were wrapped up in some such device. This trend, which confined a large part of the region's available capital in the most conservative forms of investment, discouraged risk-taking and dried up an important source of fluidity in the economy.

The effects of withdrawal were as stultifying upon political life. The decade of the 1890's saw the last substantial attempts by men of the old tradition to exercise creative political leadership. The rebuffs with which these efforts met (I am thinking particularly of the careers of Josiah Quincy and John Quincy Adams in Boston) left the field clear for the dominance externally by such politicians as Senators Aldrich, Crane, and Lodge, internally by such statesmen as Martin Lomasney and John F. Fitzgerald.

Finally, I see the effects of this withdrawal in a rapid accretion of rigid institutionalisms in many aspects of the social and cultural life of the region. The new lease on life given the Episcopal Church after mid-century was dramatic evidence of that tendency, which was also marked in a variety of philanthropic and educational enterprises that provided additional forms for the maintenance of family solidarity and influence.

With the community thus divided and with their own lives so thoroughly hedged about, what did the young men of the older stocks find worth fighting for, struggling against?

Back in 1843 old William Appleton, then almost seventy, had confided to his diary: "I feel as much interest as I almost ever did in making money; may my zeal last!" Fifty years later Henry James recorded the contempt of the men of his generation for the materialism of the *nouveau riche*. The cultivation of the gentlemanly virtues took the place of the zest for doing, the zeal for gaining.

Young men from the country for a time continued to vitalize the region's economy. Native and immigrant outlanders from many places gave a fresh term to the organization of trade and merchandising—Eben Jordan, William Filene, Samuel Zemurray, C. Pappas, and Edward Pinanski. It was Theodore Vail, out of Minerva, Ohio, who grasped the implications of the Scotsman Bell's invention and provided the means for drawing the capital of Massachusetts investors into the American Telephone & Telegraph Company. So too, the universities and publishing houses, the physical attractions of Maine and Vermont, the summer

case of Cape Cod villages, continued to draw creative talent into the region. A respectable proportion of the national output of novels, poetry, and plays, of technical discoveries and philosophical ideas, still came from New England.

But neither Silas Lapham nor William Dean Howells could be satisfied with his situation. Absence of recognition in their community gave their triumphs a hollow ring. For the chasm that immobilized the older elements of the population in the fastness of a secure social and economic position, also immobilized the newer elements — only, in this case, by the insecurity and precariousness of their situation. The order, of family life, of stratified business, educational, and social relations, that kept the members of the one group in, thereby also kept the members of the other out. In this society newcomers often felt the rewards of success dim and unobtainable; only a very few would ever grasp them. These groups too engaged in a kind of withdrawal, remained apart, and completed the division in the society.

The fate of New England's schools most dramatically reflected the trend of these developments. By 1940 the region could boast of an array of institutions at every level which individually were among the very best in the country, indeed in the world. But the reformers of a century earlier, who had set off the renaissance of American education, would not have been satisfied by the work of these fine academies and colleges. For those men regarded the schools as agencies of democracy, as media through which "the whole people" would learn to know that they were "inseparably bound together in a community of interest." The mere suggestion "that there are different classes of our youth requiring different kinds of education" dismayed and horrified them.

Yet already by the middle of the nineteenth century the sons of Boston merchants complained at the prospect of going to the schools their fathers had attended. And by the end of the century the prospect was unthinkable; an old alumnus then told Charles Francis Adams he "wouldn't send a dog to the Latin School." As this group retreated to the private institutions it created for itself, the public schools were further isolated by the parallel growth of a parochial system among the Catholic newcomers to the region. In many places the old proud base of New England education fell into neglect; the public school became the prey of ignorant politicians and the resort only of those who could afford no other mode of instruction.

With these considerations in mind, can the historian properly speak of a withering of New England? I disapprove of the implied analogy. A community is not a plant, not even an organic being. I would not speak of a withering of New England any more than I would of a flowering.

But I do think it possible to speak of the growth

of a community in another sense — of a growing consciousness of common identity and mutual interests, of a growing awareness of the realistic elements of its situation and of all its human components, and of a growing effort to direct its energies toward a realization of some communal purpose. Thinking of growth in that sense, there is a dividing line at the middle of the nineteenth century that brought this region into a period of disorganization and disorder.

And there is this practical consideration to the distinction I have drawn. That which has withered cannot be brought to life again; but that which is disorganized can still be set in order.

## THE RECOVERY OF NEW ENGLAND

by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

I FIND myself genuinely puzzled by the terms, I express or implied, of the proposals before us. Something called New England undergoes a mysterious process called withering within an arc of time left indefinite. Against what total span of years this arc is to be measured is left dark, and no statement is made about the standards of fact or value which are to determine judgment.

Let me begin with "New England." If this be taken to mean New England as a physical region, one observes that, unlike European nations and a few American states, the region has lost no territory. What it was it is. Its natural resources — never great — are, allowing for normal wear and tear, about what they were. The original forest was cut down, but national, state, and municipal reserves are restoring silviculture. New England lakes and streams are mostly unharmed. There are no dust bowls, no sizable areas of erosion. If there are cellar holes in Vermont and New Hampshire, the decay of agriculture is not of the order of magnitude of ghost towns in Nevada, where, when the ore gave out, an economy died. New England agriculture now concentrates on tobacco in the Connecticut Valley or on truck gardening, on potatoes in Aroostook County, on milk for Boston or New York. The useless farm relapses to nature. But ever since Starr King wrote his book *The White Hills*, nature in New England has proved increasingly attractive to summer and winter tourists, with interesting results on New England life.

Reading the biographies of New Englanders active before 1850, one expects to find in them a chronicle of family ill-health (tuberculosis among the Emersons is a case in point); but the drive for exercise — which, by the by, stemmed largely from New England in the fifties and sixties — has improved health as the tourist use of outdoors has made outdoor values respectable.

Of course one can complain that water power is



wasted, harbors are empty, and railroads, instead of being primary, are frequently primitive; but the offset to these is a remarkable system of highways that annually brings in more millions of dollars than ever did the Cunarders or the clipper ships.

If the term "New England" be taken demographically, one notes that the region supports about the number of inhabitants one would expect — if that statement means anything. Some parts of New England lose population, others gain, but the result is a kind of equilibrium. If by "New England" one means the so-called Yankee, Puritan, or Brahmin stock, this has obviously declined in numbers. If you are Bishop Oxborn, you will thereupon lament the breakdown of Protestantism. But if you are Archbishop Cushing, you will rejoice that after a long night of Yankee heresy, New England now sees the daybreaking of faith as millions of Catholics go to Mass. Incidentally, I think Archbishop Cushing could claim with some justice that charitable institutions like hospitals, orphanages, and similar agencies are more efficiently administered by the Catholic Church than were the amateurish charities of Emerson's time.

But let us go back to demography. If you are Oliver Wendell Holmes, you might lament the passing of the Brahmin caste as the "quality" are swallowed up by the "equality," and "New England" withers away. But does it? The two senators from Massachusetts are named Lodge and Saltonstall, the president of Yale is named Seymour, the president of Harvard is named Conant, the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* is named Weeks. Perhaps these un-Celtic names are the last few stars lingering before universal darkness covers all, but I doubt it. When you are talking about people in New England, everything depends upon the people you are talking about. Who or what is a New Englander?

I must leave to economic historians the withering of New England industry, finance, and investment, but if a mere amateur may be heard, I suggest that the prosperity of the 1840's and the 1850's was a boom-and-bust prosperity, that the financial economy of the region was in real danger of collapse between 1853 and 1861, and that it was saved mainly by the Civil War with its unprecedented demand for shoes, clothing, munitions, weapons, and transportation. The New England business thinking of the mid-century, far from being cautious as tradition has it, was dominated by Colonel Beriah Sellers. Never were investments more reckless, profits more unpredictable, or stocks, notably railroad stocks, more watery.

I suggest that the spendthrift trust, to which the subsequent lack of New England vigor has been traced, was a necessary reaction to these times, and that, instead of throttling New England by denying it a transcontinental railroad terminating in Boston, it may have preserved Boston as an investment center. I further suggest that instead of lamenting

the southward flight of textile mills and the pull of the wool market westward, it would also be wise to count the producers of costume jewelry, silver, precision tools, typewriters, and other wares manufactured along the line of the New Haven Railroad.

It took New England a long time to recover from the financial spree of the eighteen forties and fifties, and I suggest that we have since witnessed, not so much withering as recovery and readjustment, as New England slowly assumes its more modest, but securer, place in the economy of a continental nation. I also suggest that until we have had a series of studies, which we do not now have, of the history of New England investment capital from 1850 on, we cannot truly say whether the charge of investment timidity is true. It may be, despite the failure of Lee, Higginson and others, plain good sense.

## 2

BUT I am not an economic historian. In the field in which I have a mild degree of competence — namely, that of artistic and intellectual history — I am unable to agree that there was any essential withering of New England intellectual energy after the Civil War. Even Van Wyck Brooks, author of *New England: Indian Summer*, dedicates his final chapters to the exceeding liveliness of New England values in the twentieth century. The difficulty is that in refuting the assumption that intellect and imagination declined in the region after the Civil War, I am likely to sound more like the Chamber of Commerce than like a scholar.

Briefly, the notion of a decline in the New England intellect results from a romantic overvaluation of the days of the transcendentalists, who were all young people in the 1840's. But if transcendentalism was a meritorious reading of the universe as immaterial ideality, the editor of the *Christian Science Monitor* can say with justice that the practical flowering of New England ideality came only recently with the creation of the Mother Church in Boston.

As for famous names, I suggest that Willard Gibbs is more than an offset for Agassiz; that William James was not only a more influential person but a shrewder thinker than Emerson; that Charles W. Eliot was quite equal to Horace Mann; that Emily Dickinson was published forty years after the death of Margaret Fuller; that the totality of fiction by and about New England after the Civil War — William Dean Howells, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Robert Grant, Elizabeth Stuart Ward, Arlo Bates, and the rest — is richer and more impressive than the totality of fiction before it, even including Hawthorne; that Charles Eliot Norton was a more influential person in the world of art than was Washington Allston; that the scholarship of William Whitney of Yale surpassed



that of Cornelius C. Felton at Harvard; that the Reverend Phillips Brooks reached quite as large an audience as did the Reverend Theodore Parker; that the ideas of William Graham Sumner carried as much weight as did those of Henry David Thoreau; that the influence of Langdell and Holmes on the law probably outweighs that of Mr. Justice Story and Chief Justice Shaw; that the contributions of New England or about New England to the modern theater far exceed the contribution of New England to the Victorian stage; that the nation has seldom seen a concentration of philosophic brilliance comparable to that in the Harvard Yard of the nineties and later when Royce, James, Santayana, Palmer, and their disciples were teaching; and that a bomb dropped on the Charles River today would wipe out one of the two or three greatest concentrations of research brains on the globe.

In the single matter of education, when one thinks of Harvard, Yale, M.I.T., Boston University, Boston College, Brown, Dartmouth, Williams, Amherst, Middlebury, Radcliffe, Smith, Wellesley, Vassar, Mount Holyoke, Bowdoin, Colby — the list is endless and should include five state universities and the famous New England preparatory schools — all created or modernized during the supposed intellectual decline of the region, I find it difficult to talk about a withering of intellectual energy.

I note further that when Elizabeth Peabody was alive and studying art, she had to content herself with steel engravings, plaster casts, and oil copies, whereas, were she alive today, she could visit distinguished museums of art in Boston, New Haven, Andover, Hartford, Worcester, and other centers. The Boston Symphony Orchestra is the creation of New England's Indian summer; Detroit, a city not under the suspicion of withering, cannot maintain one. New England has become one of the great centers of scientific research, one of the great library centers, and one of the great centers of medical education, and I confess I cannot equate this with a withering process.

The region has problems to solve of grave import, including religious and racial tensions, social adjustments, and economic balance. I do not see that its imaginative and intellectual vigor is threatened. I suggest that we have been witnessing for the last seventy or eighty years a problem of creating, adjusting to, and maintaining in New England a more or less stable economy. The region is in one sense patently divided against itself. But I do not regard this as withering. My conclusion is that the place of New England in a continental nation is necessarily less significant than the place it had a hundred years ago, but this, I repeat, is a process of adjustment.



## RAIN

by FRANCIS SWEENEY, S.J.

Lo, I awake and lie in the liquid dark,  
 Roofed with rain, chambered with running sound,  
 My feet in the tropic latitudes, each on an island,  
 Africa curving under my flanks,  
 My head on the whorled rock of Denmark  
 And Venice under my heart.  
 My ticking shilling pocked with light  
 Rides my wrist as lightly as the feet of falcon.

All the dogs of Berkshire clamor together  
 Across the echoing valley at some lost figure of danger:  
 Only the sound of hooves like water spilled clop-clop  
 From a bronze bucket.  
 In the intimate distance the train struts like a lonely idiot  
 Playing giant-steps behind the hill.  
 I float on the black flood like a drowned sailor  
 Giving away the money I never had.



*One of the most inventive of America's comic artists, AL CAPP is responsible for Li'l Abner, for that mythical area known as Dogpatch, for the Schmoo and the Kigmy, and for his establishment of Sadie Hawkins Day. This, in case you don't know, is the day when girls invite the boys to parties and festivals, a sort of annual leap year scheme. Last year it was celebrated by some thirty thousand high schools, colleges, and church groups throughout the country. In Convention Hall at Philadelphia a few years back, Capp looked down on twelve thousand celebrators all dressed like his characters. He shuddered and said, "What have I wrought!"*

## I REMEMBER MONSTER

by AL CAPP

ONE of "Li'l Abner's" most enthusiastic fans — and this is a pretty humiliating thing to admit — is me. But I don't like it for the same reason other people do — for the clean enormousness of "Li'l Abner's" heart and feet; for Daisy Mae's incredible purity (and anyone who thinks Daisy Mae's purity is incredible is un-American); for Mammy Yokum's never failing and, frankly, rather irritating wisdom. I don't like "Li'l Abner" for the good people in it. I like it for the bad ones. The Monsters.

Any cartoonist can create good people. Any cartoonist has known plenty of 'em in his lifetime, to use as source material. But it's the monsters — those unsanitary, uncouth, unregenerate, unspeakable apes, fiends, and human horrors whose lechery, treachery, and skulduggery make the golden goodness of the Yokums shine even more brightly by contrast — that I'm most proud of. It's their constant triumphs over these monsters that make readers love the Yokums, and that's why I love the monsters.

However, when fans ask me, "How does a normal-looking fella like you think up all those — *b-r-r!!!* — creatures?" I always evade a straightforward answer. Because the truth is I don't think 'em up. I was lucky enough to know them — all of them — and what was even luckier, all in the person of one man. One veritable gold mine of human swinishness.

It was my privilege, as a boy, to be associated with a certain treasure-trove of lousiness, who, in the normal course of each day of his life, managed to be, in dazzling succession, every conceivable kind of a heel. It was an advantage few young cartoonists have enjoyed — or could survive.

I owe all my success to him. From my study of this one li'l man, I have been able to create an

entire gallery of horrors. For instance, when I must create a character who is the ultimate in cheapness, I don't, like less fortunate cartoonists, have to rack my brain wondering what real bottom-of-the-barrel cheapness is like. I saw the classic of 'em all. Better than that, I was the victim of it.

All I have to do is remember back to the morning when my Benefactor and I were reminiscing about the sort of half-forgotten Old World tidbits our mothers used to feed us when we were kids. When we got to the part about fried salt herring my Benefactor, a man of strong passions, rose and roared, "We shall have fried salt herring, kid!!! Look through the phone book and find me a salt herring store!!!" I found one which even in cold print seemed to have the aura of a Saltherringorium. I called. They had it. Plenty of it.

"Tell 'em to send over a barrel," cried my Benefactor. "Today, kid — we live!!!"

The barrel of salt herring arrived, and he ordered his cook to put plenty of salt on it and fry it.

The little Filipino looked worried. "Appears as it have plenty of salt on it already," he mumbled.

"Salt herring never has enough salt on it," said my patron, and he dumped the entire contents of a ten-pound bag of salt into the barrel.

"Now, fry it," he instructed the cook — and ordered me to sit opposite him at the table. "Today, kid, you are my luncheon guest," he said.

I was thrilled. Not at being his guest, but at having luncheon. He paid me \$22 a week, and although I had no responsibilities but just one wife, one baby, one cellar apartment, and only one kid brother at Ohio State who needed \$3 a week to live (he lived on carrots and unguarded milk), I wasn't a good manager, I guess. I was always broke near the end of the week and this was the last, or no-lunch, day of the week.

The Filipino served the fried salt herring. We both dug in at once. I put a slice of it in my mouth, tasted it, but I didn't scream. Even though I knew it would be instant death to swallow it. The herring was solid hot salt. I held it carefully between my teeth, rolled my tongue back away from it, and looked across the table at my host.

He hadn't been as lucky as I was. His look of green nausea indicated that he had swallowed a bit of it.

But he was the perfect host. He arose. "I just remembered I've got to see a fella at Charlie's steak house," he gasped. "But don't mind me, kid — go ahead and finish your lunch. Give the kid all the — ugh!!! — fried herring he wants!!!" he shouted to the cook as he clapped a hand over his mouth and staggered into the bathroom.

Well, by evening I wasn't sick any more. In fact I felt pretty good, for this was payday.

When my Benefactor returned, I reminded him of that. I always had to remind him. And he was always astonished. He would invariably say "Pay-day? *Already?*" and look at me with suspicion and resentment. I always felt a little apologetic and, somehow, a little crooked.

He always paid me in cash, pulling a five from one pocket, a ten from another, and hunting around irritably, through his other clothes, for the extra small change to make up the total. It was a pretty humiliating experience for me.

He gave me a fistful of crumpled bills and loose change. I counted it. It came to exactly \$20.75.

"You owe me \$1.25," I said.

My Benefactor wheeled around and looked at me. I could see that he'd been hurt. "But, kid," he said, his voice choked with emotion, "don't you figure that lunch was worth — *something?*"

And he was right. In later life, that lunch was worth a great deal more than \$1.25 to me. For when I came to create "Soft-Hearted John," that paragon of penuriousness and gall, I didn't have to dream him up out of thin air. I knew him like a book.

The "Li'l Abner" stories I like best to do are those in which our hero, pure in heart and utterly without suspicion or guile, is neatly taken over, outrageously exploited, and in the end thoroughly bilked by some slick and shifty monster who, actually, doesn't need the pitiful little thing he cheats the poor lout out of.

I don't make up these stories. They are all variations of one classic source story. The story of Stubby Wilson and my patron.

It happened back when the country was still deep in the depression — when decent, unskilled, but willing little guys like Stubby Wilson had by the thousands given up the fight and could be seen, every night, shivering in the soup lines on Times Square. Stubby was, at the time I met him, still fighting. He wasn't quite in the soup line. But you could see from the perilous shabbiness of his clothes,

from the cornered, desperate look in his eye, that one more bad break, one trifling miscalculation, would snap the thread by which he hung on to respectability, and drop him into the gray-faced line of the shivering and shamed and hopeless.

As a youngster — Stubby was fortyish — he'd been a cow hand. He still had a vague Western air about him and he made a hard and infrequent buck doing odd jobs for the rodeos that came to Madison Square Garden. Somehow, he had become acquainted with my Benefactor and when I first saw him had come up to the apartment with a huge Western lasso, to teach him how to twirl, Western style. It seemed an odd sort of thing for this nightclubbing *bon vivant* to get interested in, but later on it developed that he had a sound practical reason for it.

He was breakfasting the morning Stubby arrived.

"Sausages!!!" exclaimed Stubby, drooling. "Real Western sausages!!! Been a long time since I smelt any o' them, Boss," he said, smiling hopefully.

"They do smell good, don't they!!!" agreed the Boss heartily, stuffing a few more down. *He* didn't care *how* many of his sausages Stubby smelled. He ate all he could, and then told the Filipino to put the rest of 'em away. He confided to Stubby that they were even better warmed over, and Stubby wistfully agreed that they were.

The lasso lesson was to take place on the sun roof. The Boss began to peel his clothes off, from the waist up. Eager to please, so did Stubby. The Boss glanced at him. Stubby wasn't potbellied; his shoulders were broader, his arms more muscular. He looked a lot better with his miserable clothes off.

"You needn't take the trouble to peel," said the Boss rather crossly.

Eager to please, Stubby put all his clothes back on. Then they went out onto the roof.

"Yippay!!!" roared the Boss, Western style, as he twirled the rope.

Several girls, sunbathing on adjoining roofs, rose, removed their dark glasses, and looked to see where the noise was coming from.

The Boss pulled in his stomach, threw out his chest, leered, and bowed.

The girls all threw up their noses, put their sunglasses on again, and lay back. But the Boss didn't mind. He saw it as a long-time proposition, and by the law of averages one of them, one day, was bound to be lonesome enough to smile back.

The lasso lesson went on for an hour, the Boss thanked Stubby heartily, and Stubby said gosh that was all right, *he* didn't mind, and they agreed to meet the next day. The Boss went off to his cool shower and Stubby started back to whatever sweating little hole he lived in. He palmed a banana before he left, turned furtively as he realized that I was sitting at a desk behind him, caught my eye — and I winked. From then on we were friends.

The lasso lessons went on for several mornings,

with Stubby being paid off in freely given thanks and stolen bananas.

Stubby kept up, doggedly, with his breakfast-admiring, but he didn't have much luck. Morning after morning, he remarked to the Boss that, amazingly enough, the corned beef hash, the ham and eggs, the small steak with fried potatoes, were all fixed real Western style, and what was even more amazing, in just the style of just that part of the West Stubby came from. "Bless me," he'd say. "Gefüllte fish — Western style! Why, that's just like my maw used to make."

The Boss let Stubby smell away at the food all he pleased. Stubby took in some mighty fine smells but not a single *actual* morsel of it did he get — until the morning he pulled that raw subterfuge. At least, I've always suspected it was a subterfuge. But maybe I'm being unfair. You be the judge.

The Boss was breakfasting on lamb chops. Stubby completely ignored them, however, and expressed the warmest admiration for the English muffins. "Real Western-style English muffins," he slavered. Bewildered by Stubby's sudden shift to admiring a type of food that costs practically nothing, the Boss lost his head, and before he knew what he was saying, he cried, "Have one, Stubby!!!"

But, as I said, this looked to me like a pretty raw subterfuge, and apparently the Boss realized this, too; for although on succeeding mornings Stubby craftily ignored the chops and steaks and eggs, and lavished the warmest praise on the inexpensive items, such as the cream of wheat and the coffee, the Boss never fell for that cheap trick again.

Well, the lessons continued and the Boss became an accomplished rope-twirler. One morning he remarked, "I wish I had a rope like yours, Stubby — one with a fancy weave."

"Yessirree!!!" chirped Stubby, eagerly. "I'll get it for you!!!" You see, this was the moment Stubby had been waiting for. He'd confided to me that if, in a couple of weeks, the Boss became interested enough in lasso-twirling to want a rope of his own, he stood to make a fast five-spot. He could get 'em wholesale for seven dollars and he sold 'em for twelve — the price the retail stores charged. Now, five dollars may not seem much for two weeks of hard labor on a sweltering New York City roof, but remember — this was during the depression, when hard labor wasn't hard to get and a five-spot was.

There was Stubby, the next morning, beaming, expectant. The Boss was delighted with the new rope, thanked Stubby profusely, slapped him on the back — and — that was all.

Stubby stood there, bewildered.

Then the Boss said he had a date, and he guessed he couldn't take a lesson that morning.

"Shall I come up tomorrow morning?" asked Stubby, trying to hide the anxiety in his voice.

"Oh, shucks, pal — don't bother," replied the

Boss. He was going to be pretty darned busy mornings from now on, he said, but when he wanted another lesson from Stubby he'd phone him, that's what he'd do. And while Stubby was desperately trying to explain that gosh, he didn't have a phone and that he'd just as soon come up tomorrow at *any* time, he left.

Stubby looked sick. And while I played Robin Hood, feeding him cold peas out of my Benefactor's icebox, he told me that he was mighty worried about that rope deal. He'd gotten it without laying out any cash (Stubby didn't have any cash — he didn't have anything) on the solemn promise that he'd pay for it, in full, that afternoon. But Stubby wasn't sore at the Boss. "A big shot like he is," he explained to me, "probably isn't even conscious he's holding up a pore slob like I am, for a few bucks."

I assured him that my Benefactor was exactly the kind of big shot who was entirely conscious of what he did to pore slobbs like him, and that the only way of getting any money out of him was my way; you simply demanded it, and stayed right there until he forked it over.

"All right then," said Stubby grimly, "I'll ask him for it tomorrow morning."

Stubby was nervous that morning. When the Boss came out of his bedroom and saw Stubby standing there, squirming and sweating and trying to smile, he glared at him. "I told you I'd be busy this morning," he snapped, sat down at the breakfast table, and buried his face in mail.

Stubby looked around to me, helplessly. I signaled to him to go ahead. He cleared his throat once or twice, but when the Boss, somehow sensing the approach of that greatest of all dangers, a request for money, suddenly looked balefully up at him, Stubby lost his nerve, mumbled something apologetic, and shambled off.

Instantly my Benefactor cheered up. He laid his mail aside, wolfed down his breakfast, and then twirled for an hour or so out on the roof. After his shower, he called eight or ten girls, saying that it was too beautiful a day to stay in the city, and how about coming for a nice peaceful ride in the country. Apparently they'd all been out for nice, peaceful rides in the country with him before, because they all said no.

He came over to my desk. "Kid," he said, "it's too beautiful a day to stay in the city. How about we take a nice peaceful ride in the country? For an hour." He added, "You can make up the time tonight."

I called home to say not to wait dinner for me, explaining that I was going for an hour's ride in the country and I'd have to make up the hour from six to ten that night. It was a way we had, my Benefactor and I, of figuring things out, fair and square.

We walked out to get the elevator, and there was Stubby. He hadn't left the building. I could



have cheered. "Look, sir," he said, in a strangled, desperate voice. "About that there rope. It cost me seven dollars — wholesale. I usually sell 'em — like in the regular stores — for twelve. But — with a friend — it's different. Just pay me the seven, sir — and that'll be fine."

The elevator door opened. In it were three other people. We entered, and the elevator started down.

Then the Boss spoke. The tone was loud, but the inflection was kind of intimate, so that all of us had the feeling that a shameful whispered secret was being hideously amplified. "Stubby," he said, "if you want to borrow money from me — as a friend — all you have to do is ask me for it. *You* know that."

Everyone looked at Stubby. He looked at the Boss, stricken.

"But, Stubby," — and the Boss's voice now had an edge of wounded reproach — "when you give me a *gift* in the name of *friendship*, don't go and spoil that friendship by coming around later and asking for" — he choked on the distasteful word — "*money!!!*" He gave his closing remark a sad and faintly British reading: "It just isn't — *cricket!!!!*"

I didn't have the courage to look at Stubby. Because I could feel, inside me, everything Stubby was feeling. I could feel him dissolving into one sweating, trembling, inarticulate li'l human hell.

The elevator landed and Stubby scooted out. I never saw him again. My Benefactor continued his rope-twirling though. He was frequently photographed, with his lasso, at hospitals, entertaining the helpless. He always had a flair for handling the helpless.

And so, when my fan mail tells me that you, the wholesome, horror-loving American people, like "Li'l Abner" best, because the monsters in it are the worst, I always feel just a wee bit ashamed. I owe it all to having had the misfortune to associate

with the daddy of 'em all. I'm sure that any other cartoonist, with the same disadvantages, could have done just as badly.

That was supposed to be the end of this memoir. But when I finished, I had the uneasy feeling that it hadn't come out correctly. I had told the story of an Evil man. In all the other stories of Evil men that I had ever written, they were punished in the end; in all the books and plays and movies about Evil men I had ever read or seen, they were punished in the end. How come this Evil man had not been?

I thought about that, and I found the answer. This Evil man was real, and the ones I'd written about, or read about, were not.

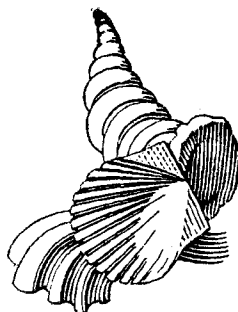
In plays and novels and comic strips the Evil are always, in the end, paid off. We grow, therefore, to believe that all Evil, in the end, will, somehow, be paid off. It helps us to endure Evil.

But, on the other hand, it helps the Evil. They know they are not trapped in a book that's got to come out right, or a play that must have a Curtain that rewards the Good Ones and frustrates the Bad Ones. They know that in life the chances are damned good that they'll get away with it.

For the real Evil operate in a vast, ever changing life-stream. Those they hurt, as their lives touch, cry out in pain, lick their wounds, and pass on. Because life must be lived, and there is no time to stop and take revenge. Especially when the wounded have been beguiled by books and sermons and comic strips into believing that something called Life Itself will, itself, punish the Evil.

Mostly, it doesn't. It didn't punish my Benefactor. He grew richer and healthier, more famous and more honored. He kept no old friends, but he made lots of shiny new friends. Nothing happened. He just grew older and eviler.

(Mr. Capp's next story, "Young Van Schuyler's Greatest Romance," will appear in the May Atlantic.)





## POEMS

by OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY

### NOAH'S ARK

NOAH should have left to drown  
Or most rigidly alone  
All the microbes of disease,  
To wit, the one that makes you sneeze  
And that of dental caries;  
But old Noah did not bungle  
With his inmates of the jungle;  
Did not have to give them physic,  
For the Lord had made them seasick:  
So, instead of roar and riot,  
Everything was rather quiet.  
Thus the sympathetic cat  
Vomited beside the rat;  
And the lion at the lamb  
Jerked a friendly diaphragm;  
For the lion, far offshore,  
Could not be a carnivore;  
And the lamb, while the Ark wallowed,  
Did not care if he were swallowed.  
('Twas the equinox of autumn,  
And the Ark had a flat bottom)  
So peace reigned instead of ructions  
In spite of close-up introductions.

Noah had to make excuses  
To the two hippopotamuses  
When they bellowed, "As for us  
We are both amphibious,  
And a gambol in your Flood  
Cannot help but do us good.  
So we want to disembark  
From your desiccated Ark."  
Noah answered softly, "Whist!  
Do you want to make her list?  
All the earth is swallowed up  
There is nothing left to crop,  
And the gathering miasma  
Is enough to give you asthma."  
Then he touched each orbèd buttock  
With his presentation boat hook,  
And he said, "Until we're harbored,

You will stay to port and starboard  
Just to stabilize the boat."  
This is where we end the quote.

Next he shouted, "That will do!"  
To the sprightly kangaroo.  
"Must I always tell you, 'Stop it!  
Find some other place to hop it'?  
Looping through the Giant Sloth  
Shows how foolish you are both."  
Then he put a whorlèd snail  
At the junction of her tail  
Just to inculcate the notion  
That there's something in slow motion.

While all this was going on,  
The Queen bee murmured to the drone,  
"Though you've got me where you wanted,  
Don't you take too much for granted.  
I had lovers once in swarms  
Mad to take me in their arms,  
Thousands who would call me 'Honey.'  
Here I think it far from funny  
That from them I should be thus banned  
With a fraction of a husband."  
All the drone could say was, "Hum."  
While the Queen said, "Bumble, bum!"

"Land ahoy?" asked Noah. "Nope!"  
Said the dappled periscope  
Noah used, for the giraffe  
(Making the hyena laugh)  
Was his lookout since no necking  
Was allowed between the decking.  
"Never," said he, "have my orbits  
Seen so many floating carpets."  
Noah yelled, "Hurray, hurrah!  
We are off Armenia.  
And that loud 'rat-tat-a-tat'  
Means we're stuck on Ararat."

Then, on summits snows had blanched,  
Beached a barque was never launched.

Oh, the joy and the elation  
Of the Great Disembarkation!  
The enlargement and relief!  
They were almost past belief.  
Oh, the clawing, pawing, stretching  
Of the muscles stiff from retching.  
How they looped and rolled and grunted  
For their free style had been stunted  
So much that the careful Noah,  
Like a pole, paid out the Boa.  
Joy! They saw before their eyes  
The rivers five of Paradise.

Who could tell to them what land meant?  
Suddenly, the Lord's commandment  
To get rid of inhibitions  
Brought on by the Ark's conditions,  
And repopulate terrain  
Emptied by the recent rain,  
Was remembered, and seemed good.  
Anyhow, a lively mood  
Filled the creatures with a fire  
Which the poets call "Desire."

You could hear the doe moose calling,  
And the tigers caterwauling,  
While the duck-billed platypus  
Laid mammalian eggs for us.  
Everywhere the earth was humming,  
Everything was so becoming,  
"Becoming Childers everywhere":  
Pairs repairing off to pair,  
Till the universal flame  
Caught old Noah who became  
Skittish and inclined to sing.  
First, he danced a Highland Fling;  
Then he sang, "Let's have a mirthday,  
It is my six-hundredth birthday.  
No; it's my six hundred and first;  
And I'm perishing from thirst."  
Then he piped: up came a pipe,  
Wine whose grapes were overripe;  
But the little fermentation  
Added to their delectation \*  
(\* Often yellow effervescence  
Has abetted convalescence)  
And the pipe escaped bilge waters,  
So he shared it with his daughters,  
Till the dawn of morning saw  
Noah his own son-in-law!

## JONAH AND THE WHALE

DOUBT would oftentimes assail  
Me, a youth, about the Whale,  
When I feared I had no *bona*  
*Fides* in the Whale and Jonah.

There are very many species  
On the Ocean's superficies  
Of those large, marine mammalia  
Called Cetacea or Whalia,  
Which could give an exhibition  
Of extremes of deglutition.  
Yes; a whale a man could swallow  
And eject him from the hollow  
Of his tummy if ingestion  
Interfered with his digestion.  
Jonah's Whale, it seems, was loath;  
But I've got to swallow both.

So my youthful faith was shaken  
Until I was duly taken,  
To undo this mental twist,

To an old Psychiatrist,  
To a man with mind so supple  
That my little boyish scruple  
Touching Jonah and the Whale  
Could no more my faith assail.

"First," he said, "our callow youth  
Is too anxious for truth.  
'What is truth?' asked jesting Pontius.  
What's the Whale but the Subconscious  
Of poor Jonah? And the 'Whale'  
Is what will engulf us all  
If we cannot sublimate it.  
Jonah managed to abate it  
When he spent that lost week-end  
In his Whale. You see, my friend,  
In the reign of Jeroboam  
There were queer things in the foam."

I wished my shaky faith remained;  
Some things are better unexplained.



*An American novelist turned farmer, LOUIS BROMFIELD has been rousing all who will listen in his fight for conservation. In his vigorous speeches from coast to coast, and most of all by the yields he has produced with modern methods on his own Ohio farm, he has shown that run-down, eroded acres can be transformed into fertile, productive fields. In this article he speaks from his experience as Chairman of the Ohio Wildlife Division, and the paper will be part of his new book, Out of the Earth.*

## POOR LAND, POOR HUNTING

by LOUIS BROMFIELD

### 1

SOIL Conservation Chief Hugh H. Bennett is responsible for the saying that "poor land makes poor people." He might well have added that "poor land makes poor hunting and fishing," for one will not find good fishing in eroded country where the streams are filled with silt, nor in sandy country where the lake bottoms contain little vegetation and the water little or no plankton or the minuscule animal life which provides the major part of the diet of many varieties of fish. All kinds of game from the humble cottontail to the noble deer abhor worn-out and abandoned land where the soil has been depleted or the level of agriculture has become so low that the mineral fertility is no longer available to the vegetation.

Science has countless examples of the power of animals to discern and avoid mineral deficiencies and to correct those mineral deficiencies by the most desperate means. The sow who eats her young does so not through any depravity but because she has been kept penned up and improperly fed. She is hungry for protein as well as calcium and phosphorus. A sow set free with a new litter will forage her way across country taking care of them and bringing up a better, stronger litter than most sows penned and fed according to ordinary dietary formulas. She will find somehow, even in depleted areas, the minerals she needs for herself and her litter.

Cows will develop depraved appetites if fed from land depleted of phosphorus and calcium, and will take to chewing old bones in order to satisfy the deficiency. I have even heard the fantastic tale of cows on the phosphorus-deficient Gulf Plain eating dead fish washed up on the shore in order to satisfy their craving for the deficient phosphorus.

And there is the famous experiment of Professor William Albrecht of the University of Missouri, one of the greatest authorities on soil and nutrition. In this experiment, stacks of hay from five differ-

ent fields, all but one deficient in some important mineral, were set up in a winter feeding lot filled with cattle. The fifth stack was harvested from a well-managed fertile farm on which all the known vital minerals were present in the soil in good balance and available to the plants. For three successive years, regardless of how the stacks were arranged, the cattle consumed them in the exact order of deficiency of the farm soils on which the forage was grown, eating the nutritious stack first and then consuming the next best, and so on down the line to the poorest.

And there is the now famous story of the blind mule at Ohio State Agricultural College who was pensioned off and allowed to graze across the test plots of the college. Again one plot had a well-balanced, productive soil, with five adjoining plots arranged to demonstrate varying degrees of mineral deficiency. The blind old mule stayed on the fertile plot until he had grazed it down to the ground. Then he moved downward across the plots of declining fertilities in the exact pattern followed in Dr. Albrecht's experiment with the hay and cattle. Any farmer knows that if he fertilizes a strip or a part of a depleted pasture, the cattle will stay on the fertilized strip until it is eaten bare before going over to the pasture on the deficient, less well-balanced soil.

The Ohio State Division of Wildlife, which is concerned mainly with fish and wild life propagation and habitat, has long been studying the relation of game and fish to their habitat in the state. In contrast to many of our states, Ohio originally had deep, rich soils. But much of the land in time has been badly depleted, a fact to which the cottontail has shown a rapid and striking reaction.

The cottontail provides a problem with which the game commission struggled for years. He leaves the poor farm for the nearest good farm; he leaves



the depleted areas for the easy, rich living of the suburbs where the gardens are fertilized and given abundant compost and other organic material. He has become a pest in city suburbs and in small towns, while hunters over large areas in open wild country complain that they cannot find a single cottontail to shoot. It is probable that 50 per cent or more of Ohio's rabbit population resides and flourishes today *not* in the open fields of rural areas and second-growth timber but in the garden areas of suburbs and small towns. For the past two years the Division has engaged the efforts of boy scouts and others in trapping the suburban rabbits and transporting them back into rural areas.

Thus far this method seems to have corrected little, for the rabbit population continues to feed with regularity in city gardens. Either the cottontails migrate rapidly onto the nearest good soil or, on the deficient worn-out areas to which they are transported, they simply die out.

The experiments of Dr. Albrecht have shown beyond dispute the evil effects of mineral deficiencies, and in particular lack of calcium, upon the breeding capacity of rabbits. He found that rabbits fed on forage grown upon calcium-deficient land failed to breed, but that when their diet was changed to forage grown on well-balanced soil with sufficient calcium content, they bred easily and rapidly and raised large and vigorous families. When fertile rabbits raised on good forage grown upon good soil were changed to forage deficient in minerals and calcium, they ceased to breed.

The cottontail apparently abhors the regions of abandoned worn-out farms which have gone back to a wild state, although the rabbit is a wild animal and presumably prefers wild country with plenty of cover. Solitude and good cover seem to make no difference to him if the forage is of poor quality.

In metropolitan and suburban areas and in parks where good soil practices are observed the increase in skunks, opossums, and raccoons has made them pests. Not long ago in Cleveland, a skunk moved into the fruit cellar of a citizen living in the heart of the city. For days the press carried suspense stories of the family's effort to evict the skunk without lingering and odoriferous results. The animal appeared to like his new habitat and spent most of his day sleeping, refusing to be disturbed. He was finally lured out of the cellar by a tasty meal of sardines and the cellar was sealed against further invasions.

## 2

To a great extent the deer in Ohio, like the raccoons and opossums and cottontails, have taken to suburban living. Ohio, save for three or four half-wild hilly counties, is not deer country like the wild mountainous regions of Pennsylvania, New York State, and adjoining Michigan. It is a big, lightly forested area of farms, orchards, and nursery

plantations where deer can create great damage. Not many years ago it would have been difficult to discover a deer in the whole state of Ohio, but recently deer have increased steadily in number to the point where they are not only a nuisance to farmers and fruit growers but in some areas a menace on the heavily traveled roads of this thickly populated state. Four years ago, in order to reduce the deer population, the State Division of Wildlife authorized an open season on bucks, and when this failed to produce satisfactory results, does were included in the open season.

The odd fact is that the heaviest deer population is in northeastern Ohio, an area of good farms, truck gardens, and nurseries, rather than in the half-wild hilly country given back to second-growth timber. Apparently deer, like the cottontail, know where the good forage grows and are willing to risk the menace of dogs and irate farmers in order to get really nutritious food. And this despite the fact that deer feed largely off the leaves and twigs of trees which, penetrating by way of their roots below the shallow depth of the worn-out and eroded soils, are able to produce forage of a higher mineral balance and quantity. However, even the trees and undergrowth on deficient and unbalanced virgin soils will provide deficient and nutritionally unbalanced forage — a fact to which the noble deer seems as sensitive as the humble cottontail.

Scarcely a day passes without the report of three or four deer being the cause of a highway accident, or of a deer jumping through the window of a filling station or shop in the very outskirts of big cities such as Cleveland, Akron, or Youngstown. Like the cottontail they have ceased, in their quest for good forage and easy living, to avoid thickly populated areas.

A peculiar deer problem arose in Cleveland, where well within the city limits a small herd took to living off the well-fertilized shrubs and grass of one of the largest cemeteries. The destruction they caused to the living trees and plants was bad enough, but after a time they acquired a taste for the floral offerings placed on the graves at funerals. They finally perfected the tactic of watching the funeral from a distance and waiting until the mourners drove away. Then they devoured the Broken Wheels, the Shattered Columns, the Gates Ajar, and the blankets of roses left behind.

Complaints from bereaved relatives and friends forced the Division to take action. At first it attempted to trap the deer, but because they preferred the abundant cemetery diet of roses, carnations, and tuberose, they merely ignored the alfalfa hay habitually used to lure deer into the traps. Eventually the herd had to be destroyed. For myself, I should have preferred the deer to the floral offerings, but I was overruled by the army of bereaved and outraged relatives.

On our own land at Malabar Farm, as the level of the fertility was raised and the virgin subsoil minerals were made available through fertilizer, organic material, and deep-rooted grasses and legumes, both the fish and game populations increased by leaps and bounds. Adjoining the farm on the hilly side above the valley lies an area of abandoned, worn-out farms slowly being taken over again by the forest. One can walk a whole afternoon over this area and see scarcely a dozen birds, not a rabbit, and no trace even of a field mouse. But once the fence dividing that area from the restored land at Malabar is crossed, one encounters birds by the hundred, plenty of rabbits and squirrels, and every sort of game, including even a small herd of deer which lives with us the year round. The deer hide in the big fenced-in wood lots by day, but in early morning or in the evening they can be seen at the farm ponds, around the salt blocks, and pasturing on the lush alfalfa, ladino, and brome grass on which they live throughout the winter months. No chemist testing soils is a more accurate judge of the soils on the two sides of that line fence than the wild animals themselves.

## 3

ANY traveler by automobile is familiar with the vast amount of game killed along the highways; some states have even erected road signs urging motorists to be careful of the game. But the real reason for the slaughter is not the carelessness of the average driver. It is that the forage along most roads is more palatable and nutritious than that in the farmer's fields on the other side of the fence. The land along the roadsides has remained uncultivated since the first roads were laid out by a wandering Indian or by Federal survey, and is virgin soil undespoiled by a poor agriculture or by the depletion of organic materials. In the fields on the opposite side of the fence row, the soil has been depleted and the forage is short of minerals and vitamins. The farmer's livestock is forced to eat this forage, but not the wild animals, which are free to wander and will reject it for the richer food on the virgin soil of the roadside.

Recently there has been a tendency throughout the country to straighten old roads. The forage which grows along the borders of a new road cut through depleted fields is scanty and sickly, even to the casual glance, compared with the vegetation along the virgin borders of the old winding road. Moreover, the fertility of this virgin land bordering old roads is frequently augmented by the dust and the splashed mud coming from the bed of roads surfaced with limestone or with mixed gravel high in mineral content of all sorts.

On the land we rent from the Muskingum Conservancy District there are two large fields separated by a county road which for two generations

has been surfaced with limestone or with conglomerate gravel. The prevailing winds blow at right angles to the road across the fields, carrying dust away from the one and across the other. Although both fields had been treated the same by their former owners and had eventually been abandoned, in the field which regularly received the powdered limestone and the mineral dust from the disintegrated gravel the fertility of the soil has always been from 20 to 30 per cent greater. It is also notable that the pheasant population is found nearly always on the side of the road where the mineral dust has been deposited for years.

Once my partner, resenting the dust which sometimes covered the crops on the leeward side of the field, suggested inducing the county commissioners to oil or tar the roads. I promptly vetoed the proposal, observing that we were getting per acre, every year, many dollars' worth of the most valuable minerals, in highly available form, without spending a penny. Sometimes visiting farmers ask whether we do not resent the clouds of dust which on hot days blow across the fields from our graveled farm lanes. The answer is "No." The tires of the visiting automobile act as a kind of fertilizer factory, pulverizing and spreading across our fields, together with wind action, a mixture of minerals from potash and phosphorus through such valuable trace elements as manganese, cobalt, and a score of others.

Where there are both good cover and well-balanced soil of high available fertility, there you will always find the big populations of wild game, and there you will find plenty of field mice and pheasants, quail, and other birds; there too you will find the owls, the foxes, the catamounts, and other predatory animals. There too you will find the balance in Nature operating as it should, to the benefit of the farmer, the hunter, and the fisherman as well as of the wild life itself.

Ohio has led the way among all the states in emphasizing this fact. The State Division of Wildlife pays for research and game and fish management out of the funds received from sportsmen for licenses, and from the Federal government, which, under the Pittman-Robertson Act, matches funds with the states to establish good game habitat and conservation practices. In Ohio today most of the sportsmen's money and the Federal appropriations is not spent upon hatcheries and game farms which breed artificially pheasants, raccoons, fish, and other forms of wild life and then distribute them over worn-out areas where neither fish nor game can propagate or even survive; the money is being spent on creating proper habitat and feeding conditions so that fish and wild life may thrive and propagate to maximum capacity. The policy is paying big dividends which increase with each successive year as cover for wild life increases and as reforms in agriculture provide good forage and clear, clean streams.

The old way was to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to hatch and raise pheasants and then to plant them in the fields a couple of days before the season opened, which provided less real sport than the shooting of an ordinary flighty white Leghorn chicken, or to hatch and raise at great cost fish which, when they saw you on the bank, followed you along in schools, in anticipation of a handout of liver or horse meat. The cost of each fish raised under such a program was stupendous. In one state, a survey showed that every artificially raised trout was placed in the stream at the cost of \$4.75.

## 4

As expensive hatcheries have been closed one by one in Ohio, the money saved has been spent on cleaning up streams and lakes and on the establishment of dozens of headwater lakes of all sizes, both to provide sport and to create natural spawning areas for fish. About four years ago in certain streams and lakes which had been put into good habitat and propagation conditions, all fishing restrictions were lifted. Any fisherman could fish at any time of the year and take as many fish as he liked, regardless of size. As in the case of the great artificial lakes of the Tennessee Valley Authority, where the habitat conditions are excellent and no restrictions exist, the fishing has steadily improved both as to quantity of take and as to size.

This is easy to understand when one realizes that a single female bass or trout produces up to 200,000 young fry. Crappies, sunfish, and bluegill or bream are even more prolific. In some lakes and ponds the fishing is poor because there are *too many* fish, and they are all stunted and undersized because there is not enough food for them. A fish does not grow according to age, but according to how much it gets to eat. A five-year-old bass may be seven or eight inches long or a three-year-old bass twenty to twenty-four inches according to the abundance of its diet. Considering the fecundity of any female fish, there should be — and in fact there is — no need to stock artificially a stream, a lake, or a pond where conditions of food and habitat are good.

A few years ago at Pleasant Hill Lake I happened upon a Wildlife Division fish truck dumping young hatchery bass five or six inches long into the clear water of this lake which borders our farm. The driver did not know that I was chairman of the Division, and in the course of our conversation he observed, "This is the damnedest foolishness I ever saw. It cost a small fortune to raise these fish, and a pair of bass will produce for free about fifty times as many fish as I'm dumping today." I hastened to add that I agreed with him heartily.

Ohio is a thickly populated state, largely agri-

cultural, with great industrial cities scattered evenly over its area — Cleveland, Youngstown, Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo, Akron, to name a few — and dozens of other cities with populations ranging from 50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. But Ohio has some of the finest fishing in the world — much finer in fact than in many states which spend millions each year advertising their fishing, to attract the tourist and the sportsman. And each year as Ohio's agriculture and forestry practices improve, as new headwater lakes and farm ponds are constructed and streams are freed from pollution, the fishing grows better.

A good deal of my life has been spent in Europe, in areas more thickly populated than Ohio, where there were *natural* game and fish in such quantities as I have rarely seen in the United States. Both fish and game existed even up to the suburbs of large cities, and in smaller towns one could have excellent trout fishing in the streams which paralleled the main streets in the very center of town. In these areas in France, in Austria, and in Germany, this abundance existed because the conditions of habitat and the regional agriculture were excellent.

In all of this, good soil and clean water, and the minerals and vitamins that go with them, are of prime importance. Next comes the farmer, who is the second most important factor, for in his hands very largely lies the control of such conditions. Cities and industries may and do pollute streams and lakes, but by far the greatest cause of the depletion of the fish populations, and of poor fishing, is the pollution which comes from siltation and the erosion of soil from badly managed farms in the hands of ignorant or stupid farmers. Game fish will not live in muddy flooding streams, and siltation in the form of mud eventually prevents them even from propagating. First the game fish go, to be replaced by the sluggish carp and catfish; and then, as in some parts of the eroded Deep South, there are no longer even carp and catfish, but only turtles, frogs, and snakes.

The conditions work backward as well, up the streams onto the land itself. The badly managed farm not only loses its topsoil and the availability of its mineral fertility, but the farmer's income and economic and sociological status go with it. And each year there is less and less wild life as animals desert the wretched forage grown on poor, ill-managed land for the richer stuff, which they recognize by taste and instinct, that grows on good, well-managed, and productive soil. All of these things — good hunting and good fishing, good crops and abundant propagation whether of wild life or domestic animals — come from the same place as the farmers' prosperity and independence and self-respect: out of the earth.





## An Atlantic Story



A Rhode Islander who entered the writing field by way of radio, EDWIN O'CONNOR graduated from Notre Dame in 1939, served in the Coast Guard during the war, and was for a while associated with the Yankee Network. He is now living in Boston, where he divides his time between his first novel and his short stories and satires, a number of which have already appeared in the Atlantic.

### THE INNER SELF

by EDWIN O'CONNOR

IT WAS, by now, more than two hours after the final curtain, and the room was crowded with people. Anne Stephens, aware suddenly that she was standing quite alone before the buffet, decided to walk across the room once more. It was a walk which she had taken rather often that evening, and yet it was not simply a *walk*: the word did not stand up, for her progress from wall to wall was not to be so plainly described. It was rather, she thought, a drift: a lovely, elusive, gossamer passage, in which she remained miraculously immune to the masculine lodestars who had pulled the other women about them in small, attentive clusters. Along her course, each little group had its own talk, and she seemed to float through adjoining, unrelated clouds of words.

"You could never begin to imagine," a squat, brown, barbate man was saying, "where I spent the first five days of last week." Anne noticed him vaguely; he was, she knew, by profession an aesthete of some reputation, who had once ridden to Acapulco on a bicycle.

"Five days? No, where?" a thin blonde girl asked.

"In a Cistercian monastery."

"Really? You mean, all by yourself?"

"Naturally," the squat man said, with some annoyance. "One does not go *en famille* to a coenobitic community."

"Was it fun?"

"It was a profound experience," the squat man said severely, "but I would hardly call it fun."

Anne, moving on, lost his words. They were swallowed up by the low throaty music that flooded from the cruel-looking woman in purple:—

"... a mad, mad young man, but zo attractive, do you zee? Vrom Zurich to Paris, vrom Paris to Lon-don, I vas pur-zooed by him. 'Ilse!' he vould cry, hiss eyes shi-ningg, 'it iss a blay vich only YOU can do; re-fuse me and I am dez-o-lated!' My dearss, he vas a char-mingg child, too char-mingg, zo to New York I came in zpring, and now..." She flung her palms outward in a strangely triumphant gesture which indicated, more emphatically than any words, that the rest was History.

Further along, the woman in purple was herself under discussion, as a tired, dusty rasp of a voice filed away at her dimensions.

"... a great actress?" It was a weary, incredulous echo. "Hardly, my dear. A personality, yes. Even, if you will, an overwhelming personality, although possibly a bit too overwhelming for some tastes. But a *great* actress she most certainly is not. Nor, I'm afraid, truly an actress at all. No, no, no!"

Anne reached the shadowed alcove which was her destination. She had been there before that evening; it was an oddly inconspicuous corner of the garish room—a corner intended, perhaps, for the concealment of lesser possessions: a Christmas vase, a rubber plant. Anne stood and watched, as out on the floor the human islands moved and throbbed, melted and expanded. The party was a large one; she estimated that there were at least seventy guests. Seventy guests, seventy strangers, Anne thought, and a gentle mask of ineffable resignation settled familiarly upon her face. It was in such a place, in the midst of so many, that she became more than ever aware of her own withdrawn quality.



All these people, she reflected, and yet she knew that among them was not one real friend. Anne's standards of friendship were rather exacting; so exacting, in fact, that she really could find no one who measured up to them. Her one, unquestioned ally, for whose presence she never ceased to give thanks to God, was no one from without at all; it was what she liked to refer to as her Inner Self. Ever since her husband had died, eighteen months before, it had been the rich pulse of this Inner Self that had sustained her, that had been the only companion, constant and of unfailing resource, that she had required. Now, here in these surroundings, the emotional purity of such an association almost overwhelmed her, and she felt, as she had so often on similar occasions in the past, a little like a nun.

"Here you are!" The voice broke rudely against conventual reflection. It belonged to Susan, her late husband's sister. She was forty, almost ten years Anne's senior: a small, dark, abrupt woman with a snapping eye and a speech so rapid that it rattled. An unwearying hostess, she never failed to include Anne among those she gathered about her.

"What are you doing over here in the dark?" she challenged. "Standing here like a mushroom when I have so many wonderful people out there!" Her voice rose to a command. "Come out and have a good time."

Anne smiled sweetly; she knew that Susan was really, in her way, being kind. "I am having a good time, Susan," she said. "I'm having a very good time."

"Nonsense," Susan said briskly. "No one has a good time at a party alone in a dark corner."

Anne smiled again. "I do, Susan," she said.

Susan's head darted forward and her quick, curious eyes poked at Anne for a moment. "Oh, for heaven's sake!" she said impatiently. "Well, have it your own way. I'll see you a little later on."

A faint current of irritation passed through Anne, washing unpleasantly against the sweet melancholy of her mood. For all Susan's good intentions, for all her rather too persistent consideration, there were things which she simply did not see, and one of these was that had Anne desired to mingle with these other guests, she could have done so with ease and success. Earlier that evening, purely as a matter of courtesy, she had entered two or three of the groups. As was her custom, she had contrived to go unnoticed and had been remarkably successful. Yet she was certain that from this Susan had drawn an inference that would have been humiliating if it were not so absurd. It was especially absurd to Anne, remembering, as she did, the capacity she had always enjoyed for attracting the men to whom she was partial — witness her late husband. That she should hardly have been partial to these smug, theatrical men with their endless specialized chatter and their coarse appreciations should have astonished no one who really knew her. It would

not, for example, have astonished any genuine *friend*, and by this congenial route she returned to the comforting awareness of her Inner Self.

She had, by now, and without at all being aware of it, come to accept the comfortable distortions of this boon companion as matters of fact, particularly with reference to her late husband. Actually a glum and inept young man, who had unfortunately drowned while paddling inexpertly in a shallow-water pond, he had become, through the happy chemistry of her fancy, a gifted contemplative, tragically assassinated by the jealous fates. Also, it was the Inner Self which led her to ascribe to herself a fragility of feature, a delicacy of physique, and an appealing glow of spirit. Anne looked always through this glass of amiable dissemblance, and at least it can be said that she rather liked what she saw.

## 2

Good evening, Mrs. Stephens."

Anne jumped; the masculine voice, springing from the here and now, startled her.

"Good evening," she answered. Her voice fluttered just perceptibly; despite her confidence in her own indifference, she sometimes felt an odd, primordial trembling at the voluntary approach of a male.

"I wonder if you'd mind if I sat down for a moment, Mrs. Stephens?" he asked. "I mean, sat down here. By you."

Anne could not recall ever having seen him before; she was certain she would have remembered, for he was a man of decidedly unusual appearance. In his late thirties or early forties, he was almost preternaturally tall and thin, with a thick crop of black hair brushed straight back from his forehead. Even in the dim light of the corner, Anne could see that his features, while regular enough, were smaller than might have been expected in such a long face. Their smallness was emphasized by the presence of a large hedge of mustache — a broad, hairy bar, chopped abruptly at the ends, like that worn by one of the Marx Brothers — nestling dominantly among them. It was almost, she thought, as if the face had grown around the mustache.

The stranger repeated his question. "If you'd rather I didn't join you, just say the word, Mrs. Stephens," he said, with a rueful air. "Although I must say I'm hoping you won't."

"Why . . . no," Anne said uncertainly. The onslaught of attention had caught her quite unprepared; however, she was never rude. "Please sit down."

"Ah, thank you, thank you," he said. The long body sank to the settee in a swift, strange collapse, as though all its joints had conspired to fold at once. For a moment Anne was alarmed: knowing men, she wondered if this cascading descent might not be

the preliminary to an evil maneuver. Apparently it was not. The stranger sat bolt upright and turned to face her; there remained between them an interval which was respectful rather than intimate.

"Well then," he said, his wide smile flashing, seeming to illumine the vast mustache, "this is quite a party, isn't it? Quite a party. I wonder, Mrs. Stephens, I wonder if I might dare to ask you something? I wonder if I might just dare to ask you for your opinion of our fellow guests this evening? Ah?" He gleamed at her invitingly.

"Why . . . really," she said, rather nervously, "really, I don't . . ."

"I ask you for a definite reason," he said. "This is not idle inquiry. Actually," he said, lowering his voice to the pitch of confidence, "my own feeling is that they are pretty much of a type. They're doubtless good people, very good people, in their way, but I often feel" — he paused deliberately, as if to warn of the rather special point in the words to come — "that their way is not my way." He regarded her gravely. "I wonder if just by any chance you might share that feeling, Mrs. Stephens?" he asked.

Anne hesitated. She certainly had no intention of parading her views on her sister-in-law's guests before this outspoken stranger; yet it was undeniable that he appeared to regard her views as quite important.

"I really don't know," she offered tentatively. "They are wonderful people, of course, but possibly they might seem a bit theatrical . . . superficial . . ."

A long finger stabbed the air, halting her. "*Simpatico!*" he cried, his mustache bobbing happily. "Theatrical, superficial: the very words, Mrs. Stephens. I see we think alike. They're simply not real — not," he said carefully, "genuine! Don't tell me you haven't felt that also, Mrs. Stephens?"

"Why . . . yes, I suppose at times . . ."

He seemed delighted. "Of course you have," he said. "I could sense it, I could see it. I attempted to talk with some of these people tonight, without much success." He considered. "Without any success, as a matter of fact," he said. "We had no points of contact. And do you know why, Mrs. Stephens? Because not a single one of them" — his voice subsided into the thoughtful crouch, the prelude to the wise, final pounce — "is really interested in *people!*"

The words were not unimpressive: it was almost as if he had been reading her thoughts. She wondered if by some unremembered chance they could have met before. He seemed to know her; it was all very odd, and even a little exciting.

"Do you know," she said, essaying a social laugh, "I can't help wondering if we've met before, Mister . . ."

"*Doctor!*" he said, reinforcing the correction with his superabundant smile. "Dr. Brady, Mrs. Stephens. Dr. Bernard Brady."

With similarly expectant inflection, one might have said: "Mr. Churchill, Mrs. Stephens. Mr. *Winston Churchill.*" Yet the name meant nothing to Anne; it was the title that held light. *Doctor!* The word explained much: the insight into their fellow guests, the concern for people, the accurate estimate of herself. . . .

"No, Mrs. Stephens, we've never actually met," Dr. Bernard Brady said, sweeping her with a glance of playful conspiracy, "but I do know you. That is to say, your sister-in-law and her husband are great friends of mine. They've spoken about you so much that I'm almost tempted to say I know all about you." There was a moment of toothy dazzle; then Dr. Brady continued with increased earnestness. "Almost tempted, Mrs. Stephens, but not quite, because in my few minutes of conversation with you I've discovered" — again the hushed, precessional pause — "that you're far too complex a person for anyone to know!"

This handsome compliment drove Anne to blushing confusion. Not since the early mumbled appreciations of her late husband had she faced an analogous situation; it was not easy to determine just how to respond with grace. Fortunately, Dr. Brady offered some assistance.

"I hope you don't mind my speaking so frankly," he said. "I'm afraid frankness is an occupational disease with me; often, in my profession, saying exactly what one thinks is of great help."

Anne understood. She had read *Green Light* and the novels of A. J. Cronin; she was not ignorant of the ways of the healer. She murmured politely about flattery, then slipped into evasion by uttering a desultory phrase in praise of her sister-in-law.

"Yes, a charming woman," Dr. Brady agreed. "I've known her for some time now. I first met her," he explained, "in my professional capacity."

"I see." At no time had Susan said anything to her about Dr. Bernard Brady.

"She comes in regularly for a checkup." Then, without warning, he said astonishingly, "I see you've been admiring my mustache."

Anne started and reddened. She began to stammer a reply, but Dr. Brady mercifully interrupted.

"Many people do. It is an unusual mustache" — he pronounced the word with an odd, Continental elegance — "and I wear it for a rather unusual reason. May I tell you about it, Mrs. Stephens?"

"Please do." She was relieved that her furtive survey had been interpreted as being one of admiration; she had no wish to wound Dr. Brady. She found him increasingly interesting. Although not really a handsome man, in the ordinary sense of the word, he undoubtedly had his points of compensation. She was quite willing to forgive so minor a vanity as his singular pride in his mustache.

"In memoriam," he said, pointing respectfully to his upper lip. "I wear it, Mrs. Stephens, in memory of a man who was both my father and my

greatest friend: Dr. Alfred Coleman Brady. He died four years ago, on Labor Day morning."

The sepulchral quality of the announcement indicated that Dr. Brady was not a man to forget easily the loss of a loved one. Anne was moved, and murmured a phrase of condolence. "But isn't it wonderful that you could follow in his footsteps," she said. "I mean, in your profession."

"Yes," he said. "It's a family tradition with the Bradys. I am the fourth generation in the profession."

"Such a splendid heritage!" Anne said warmly. "And did you personally take charge of your father's case during his . . . his last illness?"

"Oh, no, no!" Dr. Brady exclaimed. "My goodness, no! With *his* kidneys? Why, Mrs. Stephens, they were three times their normal size!"

Anne blushed, almost dissolving in embarrassment. She had forgotten that skilled physicians seldom elect to take care of their own; it was a question of emotion warping objective judgment.

"He was in far, far better hands than mine," Dr. Brady said, in a humble voice. "He had the best of care, Mrs. Stephens, even though he was ill a very long time. I was devoted to him; he had given me so much it was impossible to repay him. But still I wanted to do *something*, some one final thing that would give him pleasure. It finally came to me. My father was inordinately proud of his rich mustache, Mrs. Stephens, and it came to me that I might grow one exactly like it, as a sort of symbol, don't you see, that I was *carrying on*. Well, it was completed shortly before he passed away — and, Mrs. Stephens," he said gravely, "when he realized what I had done, I've never seen a man so pleased! And then, when it was all over, I resolved that I would wear it always" — again the effective pause — "*in memoriam!*"

It was a tale of such moving simplicity that Anne felt a quick, liquescent flood of sympathy for the man who told it; she had done him the gravest of injustices in supposing the mustache to be a flag of personal vanity.

"Doctor, I think that was wonderful of you!" she exclaimed, her eyes shining.

"Really? Do you really, Mrs. Stephens? I'm so glad. You don't think I'm too . . . sentimental?"

"No, no!"

"Well!" Dr. Brady said, straightening briskly. "I mustn't bore you with all these stories about myself. Here I am, with a pretty and intelligent woman, and all I can talk about is Dr. Bernard Brady!" He shook his head in a flurry of self-accusation; it proved to be a gesture of such prolonged generosity that he appeared to be apologizing for all similar defections of the past.

Anne broke in on the penitent. "Please, Doctor, I wish you'd continue telling me about yourself, your work. I'm really enjoying it extremely. I've always felt that a doctor was so much closer to

things than the rest of us. I mean, you have such a direct experience with life!"

"That's true," agreed the Doctor, recovering from contrition. "It is an interesting vocation. And although from a strictly material point of view other fields might have offered me more, I have never regretted my choice. It may seem like an exaggeration to say so, Mrs. Stephens, but I would not trade a single year of my day-by-day experiences" — pause — "for all the rice in China!"

"It must be so satisfying to know that you're doing such a *good* work," Anne sighed.

"Yes," he said. "Yes, it is."

"I mean, there are so many people who fail to see that there are considerations beyond the material. I admire a man with ideals, Doctor. I think every woman does."

"Every woman should," corrected the Doctor, "but only the rare one does, Mrs. Stephens. Now, I have my ideals," he said thoughtfully. "I'm no goody-goody boy, but I've always had my ideals. I suppose that it is my extensive work with people, so many kinds of people, that is responsible. You're sure I'm not boring you, Mrs. Stephens?"

"No, indeed," she said dreamily.

### 3

SHE basked in the warm and unaccustomed glow cast by this man of science. Free of insularity, his view was broad and kind, humane and unselfish. Anne could not help recognizing in this good companion the possible yeast from which a future might well be fashioned. She did not know — he had not said — what kind of doctor he was; it did not matter. Her eyes saw his long hands, folding and unfolding as he talked. They were the scoured, immaculate, powerful instruments of health; they were the hands of a surgeon.

"I may be too humble, Mrs. Stephens," the Doctor said, his fine elastic smile lending the words a secular sanctity, "but I believe that my work must primarily be with the common people. I like to think of the members of my profession as *clergymen*, in a way, treating the ills of those who come to us for comfort, without respect to class."

He went on, the noble tide of speculation rolling ever forward, but he was only half heard; Anne was otherwise occupied. Hand in hand with the Inner Self, she was racing through the corridors of time. One delightful image after another flashed before her; the youthful, sullen face of her deceased husband, with her so often in the past, was now replaced by a countenance which was sensitive, skilled, and matured, its great mustache concealed behind a surgeon's mask. She saw the owner of this face progressing to the forefront of his profession: a long, lanky man, moving with Lincolnian dignity through antiseptic halls, trailed by the grateful huzzahs of the convalescent. She saw the



powerful fingers rest, for a moment; press gently upon her arm for encouragement. . . .

"... in the mind!" said Dr. Bernard Brady loudly. "So much pain is in the mind! Anesthesia is all very well, Mrs. Stephens, but there is pain of the sort our anesthetics do not touch. In such cases, Mrs. Stephens, I talk to my patients, I soothe them, I . . ."

The surgeon's mask disappeared; in its place she saw a long and elegant figure in an office of quiet pastels, speaking in low, probing tones of hypnosis to the jangled, the overwrought. She saw this man, guided by the sure hand of his helpmate, move onward and upward through innumerable ids, egos and superegos, traveling steadily past the intermediate stages of psychiatric fame. She saw him as he *arrived*; and then, simultaneously, she saw herself, elderly and exquisite, poised beside him at a State Reception, while the President of his land paid belated tribute to the Healer of a Nation. And finally — and most clearly of all — she saw the celebrated doctor turn and, with the famous voice itself now broken by emotion, pay public homage to the woman who had made it all come true. . . .

## 4

WHAT are you two doing over here? Playing footsie?" The sharp, demanding voice cracked through all dreams; Anne, once again, was dashed back to the present. She looked up to see Dr. Bernard Brady rising to greet her sister-in-law.

"Ah, Susan!" he exclaimed. "What a fine chat I've been having with Mrs. Stephens! We've been getting along famously."

"Mmm," Susan said. She turned to Anne. "I thought you liked to be lonely. Bernie the next best thing?"

Anne flushed. "Really, Susan," she said, "Dr. Brady and I were merely . . ."

"Skip it," Susan said. "I'm only kidding. Say!" she snapped, addressing herself belligerently to the Doctor, "I've got a bone to pick with you, Bernie. You know that upper left molar you filled for me?"

"Yes, of course," he said. "On Tuesday."

"Well, it hurts. It started hurting tonight and it hurts like hell. What's more, I think that part of the filling's fallen out. What did you put in there, anyway? Cheese?"

Dr. Brady laughed, in high good humor. "Pretty expensive cheese," he said. "That was one of my best gold fillings, and I'll guarantee that nothing's wrong with it. You're one of my very special patients, Susan. You know that."

Anne listened in frozen disbelief. *Teeth? Fillings?* She knew it could not be; somewhere, a disastrous mistake had been made, rectifiable at any moment.

But that moment did not come; Dr. Bernard Brady inclined professionally toward Susan. "It looks fine from here," he said. "I'll tell you what.

You've probably been chewing on ice all evening and maybe you do have a little reaction. If you have a trace of it in the morning, call me up. But you'll be perfectly all right, just you wait and see."

"I'd better be," Susan said grimly, "or I can think of one dentist who might just as well pick up his forceps and head for the hills."

*Dentist!* The word struck her hard, in full, disillusioning horror. Dr. Bernard Brady, surgeon, psychiatrist, comfort of her declining years, was in fact a dentist! A man who spent his days poking about in other people's mouths was the unheroic clay she nearly had been tricked into molding. At the thought of the monstrous deception she retreated into a chill, gray mood, formed of the fragments of fallen clouds. She shivered with shame.

Unaware of his fall from grace, Dr. Brady struck a note of continued cheer. "It's very late," he said, looking at his wrist, "and I still have some interesting mouth damage to see before the night is through. I really should have left long ago, but I'm afraid Mrs. Stephens has been far too interesting a companion." He smiled at her; with a scarcely suppressible shudder, she saw the ogling grimace wriggle out from behind the horrid comic mustache.

"Good night, Susan," he said, taking his hostess's hand. "I've had a wonderful time. Thanks for asking me." Turning back to Anne, he hooked her hand in a viscous grasp. "And as for you, Mrs. Stephens," he said archly, "thanks for making this a grand, grand evening. I have a feeling that our first meeting will by no means be our last."

Anne flinched before the unbearable roguishness; he did not notice. With a jaunty wave of the hand, and a final flash of mustache, Dr. Bernard Brady was off across the room. Anne watched him bitterly.

Susan exhaled. "Ah!" she said. "There goes an awfully good dentist, but New York's prize boob. He lurks around theater lobbies, snooping for gossip, and waiting to be asked to parties; tonight I got tagged. I'm sorry you were saddled with him so long. Did he bore you to tears?"

"Yes, in a way." This is the way it had to be, she thought, with sudden resignation; from her own sad experience, she knew the dim inheritance of the good woman upon earth.

"He bores me stiff," Susan said. "A lot of silly jabber about nothing at all; I think he's psycho. Thank God I'm usually under gas while he's working on me." She sighed. "The things I go through to keep my own teeth! Well, I'm going back out there and see a few people. Coming?"

"No," Anne said slowly. "I don't think so, Susan. I think I'll stay here for a while. Alone." And yet, as she said the word, she knew that she would not be alone. With the old smile of sweet renunciation tracing its accustomed pattern across her face, she prepared to give herself up to the pale embrace of the friend within herself.





ROBERT D. ABRAHAMS has been in active law practice since his graduation from Dickinson School of Law at the age of nineteen, and at present is Chief Counsel of the Legal Aid Society of Philadelphia. He founded the Neighborhood Law Office Plan and is a member of the Board of the Legal Reference Plan of the Philadelphia Bar Association. The article which follows is drawn from a report Mr. Abrahams wrote for the Survey of the Legal Profession. Out of court, Mr. Abrahams has had three novels published, the latest being Mr. Benjamin's Sword, which is based on the life of Judah P. Benjamin.

## THE NEW PHILADELPHIA LAWYER

by ROBERT D. ABRAHAMS

THE Philadelphia Neighborhood Law Office Plan, begun in 1939, tries to bring competent lawyers to householders in the middle income group — people who ordinarily do not consult lawyers at all. The Plan gives such people legal advice at rates which they can afford, and aims to prevent rather than to encourage litigation.

To accomplish the Plan's purpose, it was necessary to have its standards supervised by lawyers who had no financial interest in its success; to interest practicing lawyers in participating; to protect such lawyers from attack by members of the Bar who did not approve of the Plan; and to inform the public where, how, and at what cost the service offered could be secured.

All this was undertaken in 1938 by the Neighborhood Law Office Committee of the Philadelphia Chapter, National Lawyers Guild. The Chapter is a bar association chartered under Pennsylvania law.

It is heartening to those who made the fight for a legal service experiment in Philadelphia to know how far forward the Philadelphia Bar Association has moved during a decade, for the Association is now sponsoring a Bar Reference Plan. The fact of such sponsorship is a measure of the greatly awakened interest of the organized Bar in legal service for the middle income group.

### *More than 4000 clients annually*

The Neighborhood Law Office Plan is now in its twelfth year, and at present the twelve offices functioning under it in Philadelphia are serving more than 4200 clients annually. The Plan operates without subsidy and with fair profit to most of the participating lawyers. Clients are being served so satisfactorily that not one complaint has been filed against any participating lawyer by any client, either with the Neighborhood Law Office Committee

or with the disciplinary authorities of the local Bar. The participants are not required to be members of the Lawyers Guild or any other bar association.

### *Preventive law for the average man*

All the offices are required to keep uniform records and furnish these monthly to the Committee. The Committee is given access to all the records of the offices but is not permitted to extract names and addresses from the files. The monthly record sheets now lodged with the Committee number more than 2500 and are a valuable source of information on the practice of law in urban neighborhoods.

The Committee formulated certain maxims of practice which were and are recommended to the attention of the participants. These maxims are: —

1. Preventive law is to justice what preventive medicine is to health.
2. It is the dignity of the client, not that of the lawyer, which counts.
3. The lawyer should not be remote from his client either in geography or understanding.
4. The lawyer who makes a mystery of his fees makes a critic of his client.

No criminal cases are served under the Plan since preventive work in criminal law is sociological rather than legal. The practice of criminal law in Philadelphia is a specialty, largely concentrated among a few practitioners, and is by its very nature almost exclusively litigation.

From the beginning, the Plan has been successful. The experiment began on November 1, 1939, and was to continue for eighteen months. During the experimental period, 82.4 per cent of those who came to the offices stated that never before had they entered a law office, whether a Legal Aid office or that of a private attorney. A very large percentage of the clients came for preventive advice

rather than for litigation. Less than 5 per cent of the clients had matters involving litigation. Less than 2 per cent actually litigated. Those served consisted of a true cross-section of householders in the middle income group. There were schoolteachers, clergymen, day laborers, skilled laborers, civil service employees, and (at one office only) farmers.

A spot check of one hundred clients, among the 82.4 per cent who had never before gone to a law office, disclosed that most of these persons would have gone to a real-estate man, notary public, local politician, or banker for advice if the Neighborhood Law Offices had not been there.

The following tabulation is a breakdown as to the type of case served in the same period.

|                                               | <i>Per cent</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Domestic Advice.....                          | 14.0            |
| Contract.....                                 | 13.0            |
| Landlord and Tenant.....                      | 9.0             |
| Real Estate.....                              | 9.0             |
| Collection.....                               | 8.5             |
| Wills.....                                    | 6.7             |
| Negligence.....                               | 5.0             |
| Financial and Employment Aid.....             | 4.0             |
| Support.....                                  | 3.5             |
| Criminal (incidental to civil litigation).... | 2.3             |
| Custody of Children.....                      | 2.3             |
| Decedent Estates.....                         | 2.3             |
| Personal Property.....                        | 2.0             |
| Insurance.....                                | 1.7             |
| Workmen's Compensation.....                   | 1.7             |
| Neighborhood Quarrels.....                    | 1.0             |
| Insolvency.....                               | .5              |
| Wages.....                                    | .5              |
| Miscellaneous.....                            | 13.0            |
|                                               | <hr/> 100.0     |

The 82.4 per cent figure for persons who said they had never before consulted a lawyer remained constant, never varying more than 1 or 2 per cent during any year, provided that repeat clients were removed from statistical consideration. The figures for occupation and type of case served have also remained close to the original compilation, with no significant changes except during the war period, when the percentage of contract cases fell sharply and the percentage of domestic advice matters rose.

#### *The supervising committee*

The Neighborhood Law Office Committee acts as supervisor for the group. No member of the Committee may participate in any of the offices or have any financial connection with them.

All publicity for the Plan is handled by the Committee, and none by the participants is permitted. A weekly release is issued to a score of neighborhood newspapers, giving an informative paragraph or two concerning new or interesting developments in the law. The newspaper publishes this column without charge to the Committee.

A joint radio program is presented weekly over a

local station (without charge by the station) by the Neighborhood Law Office Committee and the Philadelphia County Medical Society. The Neighborhood Law Office portion consists of questions and answers of a general legal nature. The Medical Society presents parallel medical material.

In addition the members of the Speakers Committee address local organizations on the purpose and scope of the Neighborhood Plan. In none of the publicity are the names of the participants mentioned, nor are the office addresses given, although the neighborhoods in which the offices operate are often mentioned.

A Neighborhood Law Office may be conducted either by a partnership of two or three lawyers or by a single lawyer if he can give sufficient time to ensure proper service.

There is no financial connection among the various offices and no pooling of profits and losses. The capital for the offices is furnished by the participants and there is no subsidy from any source. The participants in each office enter into partnership agreements and deposit copies with the Neighborhood Law Office Committee.

Each partnership or individual also enters into an Agreement with the Committee by which it pledges itself to abide by certain standards or practices set up by the Committee. In return, the partnership is permitted to state upon its stationery and upon its windows that it is a Neighborhood Law Office, authorized under the National Lawyers Guild Plan. The signs used at the offices are often very large when compared with the usual lawyer's sign, and in at least two offices they are in neon lights. In another case, the sign overhangs the sidewalk like a banner and is electrically lit.

In the beginning, all offices were open part time only, but this requirement was soon waived because of the volume of business. The Agreement provides for certain minimum and maximum fees and for a fixed charge of \$1 for an interview of not more than half-hour duration. Although the cost of living has risen greatly during the operation of the Plan, the \$1 charge has been retained so far, at the request of the participants themselves, as a matter of good public relations. Persons who cannot pay are referred to the Legal Aid Society.

The Committee reserves the right to cancel the Agreement with or without cause, in which case the office is no longer to consider itself a participant. In a decade of operation only one Agreement has been canceled.

#### *Offices are self-supporting*

As to the success of the individual offices, it is interesting to note the great growth in number of clients served and in the financial return to the participants. At the end of the experimental period, the Committee predicted that an office in a suitable neighborhood should clear about \$5000

a year, to be divided among the participants, and that there should be a substantial increase for the participants for the next three to four years.

The actual figures have far exceeded this expectation. The most successful office, during a single year, has cleared more than \$15,000. This office, which is one of the original group and is now in its eleventh year of operation, serves more than 1200 clients a year, exclusive of those who come only for preparation of income tax returns. Tax clients are not represented in the statistics, and the earnings from the preparation of tax returns are not included in the figure for the profit of the office.

Seven cases out of every eight in the Neighborhood Law Offices bring in fees of \$5 or under; it is the eighth case, upon which a substantial profit is made, which enables the offices to come out ahead and subsidizes the service to the other seven. This is true to some extent in all law offices that engage in general practice. It is inevitable that some types of cases must be handled at a loss; and because the law is a profession and not a business, every practitioner expects to do that. Some cases must be profitable in order that the lawyer may earn his living. The Neighborhood Law Office probably handles more cases at a loss, but in this respect it differs from the ordinary law office in degree rather than in principle.

The location has a definite bearing on the success of the office. The typical office should be situated in the busiest block in a local shopping neighborhood. Where possible, it should be on the ground floor, but a number of Neighborhood Law Offices, because of high rental for first floor space, are on the second floor. The office is marked by a large sign, with the legend "Neighborhood Law Office—Lawyers Guild Plan," which serves to identify the office as a member of the supervised group. The names of the participating lawyers are also displayed.

The offices are very plainly designed and furnished, and usually contain no more than a waiting room and a private office. In the waiting room there is a placard stating the charges of the office for certain ordinary services, such as the preparing of a deed or the drawing of a will. Most of the offices have a few books, but in none is there what might be termed a law library. The offices are expected to be clean and reasonably neat, but any sort of "front" or elaborate furnishing is frowned upon as disturbing the psychological relation between the client and the lawyer.

### *Growth since World War II*

The statistics for three recent years follow:—

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Offices</i> | <i>Clients Served</i> |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1946        | 7              | 2984                  |
| 1947        | 9              | 3481                  |
| 1948        | 11             | 4214                  |

Statistics for 1949 had not been tabulated when this article was written, but on the basis of the first nine months of that year, it was estimated that the twelve offices operated in 1949 would serve 4600 clients.

The number of clients served does not include persons who come to a Neighborhood Law Office solely to have an income tax return prepared. In doing this work, the busy offices invariably have had to call in additional help during the tax season. In one year, one office did more than 1500 returns during the six-week period. It hired both lawyers and accountants on a per diem basis. Tax clients are served at fixed fees in excess of the minimum \$1 fee for an interview. On one occasion, the commotion at the best office was so great that it was necessary to station a policeman at the door to prevent the front wall from being pushed in. It would give a very distorted picture statistically if we should add the number of tax clients to the number of Neighborhood Law Office clients generally; for from year to year, as the forms change, the amount of such business varies greatly.

Some of the offices organized since the war have had immediate success. This is due to the long, favorable knowledge of the Plan by the community. Two of the offices which opened in 1948 did as much business in their first year as the best of the original offices did in its fourth.

But there have been several unsuccessful offices. The Committee gave earnest study to the reasons, wherever a failure occurred. One office was opened in a neighborhood in which the income of the average householder was rising and was higher than in the neighborhoods where the offices have succeeded. Such householders liked to brag to their friends about the expensive lawyer they patronized. In another office the personnel, in the opinion of the Committee, did not give enough time or effort to the office. A third was opened in a neighborhood notorious for its political-legal arrangements, which made it difficult for people who wanted to consult the Neighborhood Plan lawyer to do so without offending the politicians.

But the failures were few and far between, and in no case did they involve deterioration in the quality of service given to the individual clients while the office was open.

### *The Bar Association Reference Plan*

The opening of the Bar Reference Plan, operated by the Philadelphia Bar Association, presents an interesting factor in the Philadelphia legal service situation. The Reference Plan is a bar association sponsored office where persons who believe they need legal assistance are interviewed by a lawyer. There is a fee of \$1. If they need a lawyer, they are given an appointment with one who is qualified and who has agreed to charge a flat fee of \$5 for the first conference. There is, of course, no hostility

between the two plans. Although I am chairman of the Neighborhood Law Office Committee, I also served as a member of the organizing committee of the Bar Reference Plan and have since been a member of the board of that Plan.

The Bar Reference Plan has been open since May, 1948, and appears destined for success. Certainly, in its early months, it had many more applicants than most such reference plans had in their initial stages in other cities. I believe that this success was in no small measure due to the fact that the Philadelphia public has been prepared for legal service plans through favorable knowledge of the Neighborhood Plan.

Although a comparison of the Neighborhood Law Office Plan and the Bar Reference Plan is premature, it will be interesting to observe the two plans in operation in one city. Each plan seems to have advantages and disadvantages.

The Bar Reference Plan provides a centralized service, which is an advantage. It is located in Philadelphia's City Hall, where it receives office space rent-free from the city; the Neighborhood Law Offices must pay their own rent. The fact that the Bar Association subsidizes the Plan relieves it of the necessity of making a profit; and the weight and prestige of the Philadelphia Bar Association, which has among its members more than half of the lawyers in Philadelphia, is helpful in bringing the need for the service to public attention.

There are two advantages of the Neighborhood Law Office Plan over the Bar Reference Plan:—

1. The service is more convenient to the client, both because it is located in his own neighborhood and because he can go directly to the lawyer who is to serve him, and not have to report first to a central office and be referred from that office to another lawyer's office.

2. The type of lawyer who enters Neighborhood Law Office practice is often also the type best equipped to advise in preventive matters. Reference lists must, of necessity, be long and nearly all-inclusive, and many lawyers on such bar lists are not, by the nature of their training and practice, inclined to serve neighborhood householders in preventive matters that require more than a minimum of time and trouble.

It would, of course, not be fair to compare the number of persons who used the facilities of the

Bar Reference Plan in its first year with those who come to the Neighborhood Law Offices after they have been established so long. It is my belief that eventually the two plans will stabilize on a basis whereby the Bar Reference Plan will serve each year about the same number of persons that the Neighborhood Law Office Plan serves.

Some participants in Neighborhood Law Offices expressed fears, before the opening of the Bar Reference Plan, that their own neighborhood practices would suffer thereby, but such fears have proved entirely unfounded.

### *Looking ahead*

The future of the Neighborhood Law Office Plan in Philadelphia seems assured. The offices are well established, the public likes the participants and the Plan, and the growth is natural and unforced. It is to be hoped that both the Neighborhood Law Office Plan and the Bar Reference Plan may be supervised by a single committee. Each plan has much to give to the other.

There is no doubt that the Neighborhood Plan is just as practical for any large city as for Philadelphia; but to make it work, an enthusiastic local committee must found and supervise it. A governmental subsidy might destroy the essential simplicity of the scheme and load it with a bureaucracy. I believe that much of the success of the Plan in Philadelphia is due to the absence of any sort of bureaucratic domination or governmental tie-in.

To sum up, the Neighborhood Plan as operated in Philadelphia has succeeded beyond the expectations of its originators, has pleased and been heavily patronized by the public, has shown a way in which the old relationship of attorney and client can be preserved without socialization or bureaucracy, and has begun to plow an immense and interesting field which may be sown with profit in every urban community in America.

The sponsors of the Plan expect the second decade of service to be even more productive than the first. Much remains to be done in the field of preventive legal service. Many who need legal assistance do not know where or how to find a lawyer they can trust, to help them for a price they can pay. The Neighborhood Law Office Plan is only one small gesture toward the great work the Bar ought to do if it is to fulfill its obligation to the public.





children. Her father was a delightful host, and of his intimate friends, the children came to know James Russell Lowell, Dr. Holmes, Hardy, Meredith, Stevenson, Ruskin, and John Morley. No formal schooling was imposed on the young Virginia; she was allowed the unrestricted freedom of her father's magnificent library. This essay and the prose portrait of her father which the Atlantic published in March will appear in a volume entitled *The Captain's Death Bed and Other Essays* (Harcourt, Brace).

## SELINA TRIMMER

by VIRGINIA WOOLF

THE gardens at Chatsworth which contained so many strange exotic plants brought by the great gardener Paxton from foreign lands could boast, too, of one modest daisy whose surname was Trimmer and whose Christian name was Selina. She was a governess of course, and when we think what it meant to Charlotte Brontë and to Miss Weeton to be a governess in a middle-class family, the life of Selina Trimmer redounds more to the credit of the Cavendishes than all the splendours of Chatsworth, Devonshire House, and Hardwick Hall. She was a governess; yet her pupil Lady Harriet wrote to her when she became engaged, "I send you the enclosed bracelet. . . . I often think of all your past conduct to me with affection and gratitude not to be expressed. God bless you, my dearest friend."

Selina sheds light upon the Cavendishes, but outside that radiance little is known of her. She had a brother who lived at Brentford. From Brentford then, about 1790, came Selina, to be governess to the little Cavendishes at Devonshire House.

But were they all Cavendishes — the six romping, high-spirited children she found there? Three it appeared had no right to any surname at all. And who was the Lady Elizabeth Foster who lived on such intimate terms with the disagreeable Duke, and on such friendly terms with the lovely Duchess? Soon it must have dawned upon Trimmer as she sat over her Quaker discourse when her pupils were in bed that she had taken up her lodging in the abode of vice. Downstairs there was drinking and gambling; upstairs there were bastards and mistresses. According to Brentford standards she should have drawn her skirts about her and flounced out of the polluted place at once. Yet she stayed on.

Far from being vicious, the Devonshire House family was healthy and in its own way virtuous. No more devoted family existed. The children adored their mother. They were on the best of

terms with one another. If the Duke was an indifferent father, his daughters were as dutiful as the daughters of any country parson. One person, it is true, all the children hated, and that was Lady Liz. But they hated her not because she was their father's mistress, but because she was corrupt; whining and cooing, false and spiteful. Could it be possible, then, that an absence of conventional morality brings into being a real morality? Were not the little girls, Georgiana and Hary-o,<sup>1</sup> who knew from childhood all the facts that are concealed from female Trimmers till they were married women, far less sentimental, less prudish and silly, infinitely more honest, sensible, and downright than the middle-class girls whose virtue was so carefully shielded at Brentford?

These were questions that Trimmer must have pondered as she walked with her dubious brood in Hyde Park or escorted them to parties. They were asked everywhere. The courtyard at Devonshire House was full of coaches by day and by night. Nobody looked askance at them. So, while she taught the little Cavendishes their sums and their pothooks, they taught her; they enlarged her mind. They laughed at her and teased her and vowed that she was carrying on a love affair with Bob Adair. But for all that they treated her as if she were a woman of flesh and blood. There was only one class for the Cavendish children, and that was their own. Whatever their faults, and Hary-o always overslept, the Cavendishes were the least snobbish of people. They treated her as an equal; they accepted her as part of their pagan and classless society. When the girls began to go out into the world they wrote as frankly and freely to their "dearest Selina" about their parties and their partners as they wrote to each other.

<sup>1</sup> Hary-o. The Letters of Lady Harriet Cavendish, 1796-1809. Edited by her grandson Sir George Leveson-Gower, K.B.E., and his daughter Iris Palmer.

By the time they were going out into the great world, Trimmer was well aware of its dangers. She could take comfort in the fact that Georgiana and Hary-o were spared at least one temptation — they had not their mother's beauty. "I am delighted to be reckoned like mama," Hary-o wrote. "A very bad edition though," as an honest man said of me at Mrs. Somebody's party." They were short, fat, and rather heavy featured. But by way of compensation they had excellent brains. Their little eyes were extremely shrewd; in mind they were precocious and caustic. Hary-o could dash off a description of her fox-hunting cousin Althorp with a vivacity that any novelist might have envied, and with a worldly wisdom that would have done credit to a dowager: —

Althorp as he might have been, no reasonable woman could refuse or help loving and respecting. Althorp as he is, no reasonable woman can for a moment think of but as an eager huntsman. He has no more importance in society *now* (as he is, remember) than the chairs and tables. . . . Evenings and Sundays to him a visible penance. . . . But when he appears at breakfast in his red jacket and jockey cap, it is a sort of intoxicating delight that must be seen to seem credible, and one feels the same sort of good-natured pleasure as at seeing a Newfoundland dog splash into the water, a goldfinch out of his cage, or a mouse run out of his trap. This is the man that I cannot wish to marry. . . .

Shocked, puzzled yet charmed, Selina stayed on. But she preserved her own standards. In that intimate society where every lord and lady had a nickname, Trimmer had hers. She was called *Raison Sévère*, *Triste Raison*, *Vent de Bise*. Lady Bessborough lamented ". . . rigidly right, she forgets that one may do right without making oneself disagreeable to everyone around." And Bess, Lady Elizabeth Foster, shivered in her presence. "Bess . . . says she always affects her like a North-East wind."

Trimmer was no sycophant. By degrees she assumed the part that is so often played by the humble retainer; from governess she became confidante. In that wild whirling life of incessant love-making and intrigue she represented reason, morality — something that Hary-o as she grew up missed in her mother and needed. Mama, she owned to her sister when Duncannon pestered her, was "not prudent"; mama did not mind putting her daughter into a "most awkward situation." But Selina, on the other hand, "gave me a most furious lecture that my coquetry was dreadful, and that, without caring for my cousin, I had made him fall in love with me." It was "merely to enjoy the triumph of supplanting Lady E.," Trimmer said. Lady Harriet was angry at Trimmer's plain speaking, but she respected her for it nevertheless.

More and more, as Hary-o grew older, the extraordinary complications of Devonshire House morality involved her in tortures of doubt — what was her duty to her father, what, after her mother's death, to his mistress, and what did she owe to society? Ought she to allow Lady Liz to drag her into the company of the abandoned Mrs. Fitzherbert? "And yet I have no right to be nice about the company I go into; or rather no power, for I think no blame can be attached to me for that I so reluctantly live in." Strangely, it was not to the Bessboroughs or to the Melbournes that Hary-o turned in her dilemma; it was to Trimmer. Though companion now to old Lady Spencer, Trimmer came back to bear Harriet company at Devonshire House when Lady Liz was queening it there, saying "we" and "us" all the time, and fondling the Duke's spotted and speckled puppies in her shawl. Trimmer alone had the courage to show that the dogs bored her. Trimmer compelled the Duke and George Lamb to talk about "the Quaker persuasion and Mr. Boreham's scruples about giving the oath." In those tortured days Trimmer, "arch advocate of reason," was the greatest blessing to her distracted pupil.

And it was finally to Trimmer that Harriet turned when the crucial question of her life had to be decided. Was she to marry her aunt's lover, Lord Granville? He had two children by Lady Bessborough. They had always been in league against her. She had hated him; yet there had come over her the spell of his wonderful almond-shaped eyes, and it would mean escape — from Lady Liz, from the ignominies and insults that her father's mistress put upon her. What was she to do?

What she did was to marry Granville — "Adored Granville, who would make a barren desert smile." And it proved, on the face of it, an ideal union. Lord Granville became a model of the domestic virtues. Harriet developed into the most respectable of Victorian matrons, wearing a large black bonnet, illuminating book markers with texts, and attending church assiduously. She survived till 1862.

But did Trimmer suffer a Victorian change? Or did Trimmer remain immutably herself? There was something hardy and perennial about Trimmer. One can imagine her grown very old and very gaunt, dwindling out her declining years in discreet obscurity. But what tales she could have told had she liked — about the lovely Duchess and the foolish Caro Ponsonby, and the Melbournes and the Bessboroughs — all vanished, all changed.

The only relic of that wild world that remained was the bracelet on her wrist. It recalled much that had better be forgotten, and yet, as Trimmer looked at it, how happy she had been in Devonshire House with Hary-o, her dearest friend.

# Books and Men

"The Self-effacement of a Modern Biographer" might well be the subtitle of this portrait which ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER has drawn of his lifelong friend M. A. DeWolfe Howe. Mr. Pier was for thirty years an editor of the *Youth's Companion*, where in the days of serenity their friendship began; he taught English at St. Paul's School and at Harvard College, edited the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, and has scored repeated successes with his books for boys.

## MARK HOWE OF BOSTON

by ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

### I

SPECULATING with a group of friends on the possibility of interplanetary travel, the late Professor Alfred North Whitehead remarked that the Earth's first visitors to Mars should be persons likely to make a good impression. "Whom would you send?" someone asked. "My first choice would be Mark Howe," replied the venerable sage.

To Mark Howe's friends, his qualifications for such a mission are obvious. His quick interest in new people and fresh points of view, his hospitality to ideas, and his courtesy should make him a welcome visitant in any sphere. In his terrestrial career his interests have led him into the field of biography, where his exploration of personalities, widely diverse, some of them eccentric, has yielded, under his sympathetic probing, a revelation of character and expression. For his success as a writer of biography he laid the foundation by what he terms his steam-shovel qualities, his persistence and thoroughness in excavating significant facts from masses of documents and letters. But to the grubbing industry of the antiquarian were added the poet's imaginative insight and the artist's skill in rounding out and lighting the portrait.

No more self-effacing biographer ever lived, nor one more industrious. His first biography, a short volume on Phillips Brooks, appeared in 1899; then came *The Life and Letters of George Bancroft*, *The Life and Labors of Bishop Hare*, and *The Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*; *Memories of a Hostess*; *Barrett Wendell and His Letters* (which received a Pulitzer Prize), *John Jay Chapman and His Letters*, *Holmes of the Breakfast-Table*. So run the titles in biography to a total of eighteen, not including the *Memoirs of the Harvard Dead in the First World War* under his editorship; a labor of love in the performance of which he actually wrote over 220 of the sketches. Incidentally, he holds the present Marathon record in the *Atlantic*: his first contribution appeared in May, 1893, and his most recent, a poem entitled "After Eighty," fifty-five years later.

As an undergraduate at Lehigh in the eighties he found his best friend in Richard Harding Davis. Together they wrote for the Lehigh *Burr* and it was Howe who succeeded Davis as the managing editor. Out of this friendly competition came the determination to make writing his profession. Howe's father, who was Bishop of Central Pennsylvania, would have preferred to have him study for the ministry, and thought that the impediment in his speech which would certainly have prolonged unduly his conduct of a church service could be overcome by the exercise of will power. In his later years Howe has acquired comparative ease and fluency of speech—simply, he thinks, in the process of growing old. Although he rejoices in the new freedom, his friends have always felt that whatever he had to say was worth waiting for, and sometimes gained a special pungency from the explosive force with which it was finally delivered.

After Lehigh came two years of graduate study at Harvard; then with his M.A. degree and a letter of introduction from Professor Child he applied for a job at the *Atlantic*. Horace Scudder, the editor, had nothing to offer, but passed him along with a friendly word to the editor of the *Youth's Companion*, in whose leisurely routine Howe served for five years as one of numerous assistant editors. Mr. Scudder, however, kept him in mind and when an opening occurred in the *Atlantic* office invited him to fill it. Before the offer became binding Howe had to interview Mr. Henry O. Houghton, the venerable head of Houghton, Mifflin and Company, then the proprietors of the magazine. The interview took place shortly after the old gentleman had returned from his customary hearty luncheon at the Union Club. In the middle of a sentence Howe suffered a characteristic paralysis of speech; his lips worked convulsively but uttered no sound; pawing the floor with his foot, sometimes efficacious, brought no release. Mr. Houghton closed his eyes and went to sleep. Under the stimu-



lus of chagrin Howe became suddenly articulate. He exploded. The publisher awoke, smiled benignly, and named a salary that was satisfactory.

One who had been accustomed to the flexible routine of the *Youth's Companion* was dismayed to learn that every employee of the Houghton Mifflin firm had to enter daily in a black book the time of his arrival at the office, of his going out for lunch and his return, and of his departure at the end of the day. With a temerity that seems out of character the new assistant editor wrote on the title page of the black book, "The Short and Simple Annals of the Poor." Instead of reprimanding him for impudence the firm took the hint and discontinued the use of the book.

Howe had been assistant editor but a short time when his chief, who was planning to retire, gave him a copy of a small book he had written, in which were inscribed the words, "H. E. Scudder, to his understudy." The promise of promotion that was implied was foiled by the serious trouble that Howe began to have with his eyes. The oculist's prescriptions were of no avail; he had to give up reading, resign from the *Atlantic*, and retire to the family farm at Bristol, Rhode Island, where for the next five years he saw the world through dark glasses. He farmed and he fumed. Drastic and painful treatments slowly began to restore his sight. As the light came back he began to write again — poems enough to fill a slim volume and then, as the first in a series of Beacon Biographies, a 20,000-word biography of Phillips Brooks.

On September 21, 1899, he married Miss Fanny Quincy, the younger sister of the Mayor of Boston. Her wit, her delightful humor, her judicious skepticism, were a stimulant which quickened and sharpened his work. She was herself a writer of distinction, but her essays in the *Atlantic* — "My Wife's Address-Book," "My Wife's Check-Book," "A Guilt-Edged Conscience," to name but three — were always published anonymously, as were her books, though their authorship could not long be kept secret. When any of them was praised in her presence, she would declare severely that it should no more be mentioned than if it were an illegitimate child. Upon her husband's proposal to dedicate one of his books to her, she ironically suggested the following: —

To that Daughter of Boston  
Whose censure and ridicule  
Have vastly complicated my task  
I dedicate this work  
At her own earnest request.

Walter Hines Page had succeeded Mr. Scudder as editor of the *Atlantic* when at last, in his mid-thirties, Howe was able to return to editorial work. There was no opening in the *Atlantic* office, but once again the *Youth's Companion* was hospitable. It was then installed in a fine new building with

imposing arched entrance and marble hall at the corner of Columbus Avenue and Berkeley Street. Never in one office were there so many editors with so little to do and such ample space to do it in. On the top floor in a room about the size of a tennis court the manuscript readers, six in number, sat at their roll-top desks, which with the accompanying chairs and a long table in the middle were the only furniture. Their hours were from 9.30 in the morning until 4.00 in the afternoon, with as much time off for lunch as they might require or find it agreeable to take. A dozen other editors of slightly more advanced status enjoyed additional privileges, each being secluded in a room of his own, where he was often able in a couple of hours to dispatch the work of the day. Nearly all the editors passed considerable time visiting one another, exchanging the newest stories, or strolling outdoors to enjoy the relaxation of a cigarette, smoking in the building being forbidden. Sometimes one passing the open door of an editorial room might see the solitary occupant comfortably asleep. In the readers' room where Howe was installed his gift for song was frequently invoked.

It was a delightful place of employment for a group of congenial and not too serious young men, but for those who felt strongly that life is real, life is earnest, it was frustrating. "In this office," remarked John Mack, who was quite as witty as his distinguished brother-in-law, Bourke Cockran, "Ellery Sedgwick is like a locomotive lying on its back, with its wheels going round and round."

## 2

ONE day three enormous Saratoga trunks were brought in and set down in Howe's corner, making a barrier around his desk. Any little happening out of the ordinary was sufficient to draw the readers from their swivel chairs; they all stood by while Howe, pacing about in a circle and tapping the palm of his hand with a trunk key, had more than the usual difficulty in communicating the information that they waited to receive. Ultimately they learned that he had agreed to write the biography of George Bancroft and had obtained permission from the management of the *Youth's Companion* to have the historian's papers deposited in the readers' room; he had not anticipated, however, any such formidable consignment as confronted him. A view of the contents of the trunks dismayed the idlers looking on. Indeed the masses of papers and bales of letters might have daunted anyone blessed with strong eyes as well as sturdy character. Fortunately the cure that Howe had undergone proved to be permanent. After four years during which he devoted virtually all his spare time to Bancroft, the monumental two-volume biography of the historian and diplomat was finished. It won for the author immediate recognition by American scholars.



Howe looks upon his biographical writings as an extension of his editorial work. His method as a biographer has been to let the subject, as far as possible, tell his own story. Most of the persons with whom he has dealt were highly articulate; in their letters they left records of their thoughts and activities, often buried under much unimportant detail. To release what was vital and interesting, to supply explanatory comment and bridge narrative gaps, called for editorial skill and wide collateral reading. Howe thinks that he may look forward to a small immortality in footnotes, for the reason that his biographies are source material for historians. The authors of books and articles relating to the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, must consult his life of George von L. Meyer, who at that time was the American Ambassador at St. Petersburg. So too, those who would interpret the New England of past days are inadequately equipped for the task unless they have read Howe's books dealing with some of its eminent figures and presenting for the first time material essential to complete understanding.

The late Gamaliel Bradford, himself a most industrious writer, remarked in a letter to Howe about the biography of Barrett Wendell, "I am especially struck with the immense amount of labor involved. . . . You have done more work on this [book] than I have done in the last twenty years." In the "Wendell," Howe quoted his subject's opinion of a biographer's duty: "Whoever would tell the truth about any man must be in the literal sense his apologist . . . I mean that the first and perhaps the only duty of an honest biographer is, so far as may be, to set forth the man of whom he writes as that man saw himself, and to explain him on his own terms."

That theory may lead to satisfactory results when the subject is conspicuously an extrovert, who takes an objective view of himself; it cannot be successfully applied to one who, like Barrett Wendell, was introspective and given to underrating himself. In order to show Wendell in action Howe had to seek out other sources than his letters. A revealing passage, for example, is the brief report of an occurrence when Wendell with his wife and daughter was returning from Cambridge to Boston after witnessing a football game. "As they were boarding an electric car a man in the crowd thrust Mrs. Wendell aside and was pushing through the door when Wendell managed to arrest his progress by hooking the man's umbrella with the crook of his own walking-stick. 'Be careful, sir!' came the protest, 'you are breaking my umbrella!' 'On the contrary,' said Wendell, 'I am mending your manners.'"

The accuracy and perceptiveness of Howe's appraisal of character are nowhere better shown than in his closing words on Barrett Wendell: "Honest, pure, and original of mind; chivalrous

and generous to the verge of the quixotic; given to decking serious thought in the motley of jest and caprice; but to the core of his being, faithful, and wise, and kind."

It is a biographer's duty to bring vividly before the reader a man's outward form and appearance. Howe describes John Jay Chapman as follows: "One saw him approaching on a New York street, perhaps Fifth Avenue, and felt at once the nearness of a notable figure. Tall, with the commanding presence to which a prophet or poet might lay claim, bearded, in his later years, and then of a grizzled grayness, with small, piercing, friendly eyes and clean-cut features, bending slightly forward as he walked with shorter step than most men of his height, dressed with something of the sweet neglect that sits best upon the well dressed and well formed, wearing a woolen scarf about his neck and shoulders in almost all weather, and singular above all else through the lack of a left hand."

In all the biographies Howe's talent for making pictures shows attractively. *Memories of a Hostess* — his old friend Mrs. James T. Fields — is not properly a biography; it is a succession of charming scenes and sketches. One of the most delightful is the description of a dinner party at Mrs. Fields's Charles Street house in Boston at which Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, then nearly ninety years old, rose in response to her septuagenarian hostess's request and recited "The Battle-Hymn of the Republic," accompanying the line ". . . be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!" with a little clap of her hands and a decorous prancing of her feet, while from across the table Henry James gazed with rapt attention at the tiny figure. Afterwards Howe escorted her to her carriage and, having seen her comfortably bestowed, was about to bid her good night when she remarked with satisfaction, "Annie Fields has shrunk."

### 3

A BIOGRAPHER is the richer for the poet's gift of divination. Its vivifying influence in Howe's work has been well recognized by Van Wyck Brooks in the following passage from *New England: Indian Summer*: —

"The biographer of Phillips Brooks, Bancroft, Norton, Moorfield Storey, and later of Wendell, Holmes, and John Jay Chapman, was a poet all the time; and that is why, in Mark Howe's books, the Pharaohs came to life again, as they died again in other 'Lives and Letters.' He shared in whatever was human because it was human. . . . Most of the other biographers were dazzled by their heroes, or they were humdrum themselves; and they so swathed the mummies of the Pharaohs that it took a generation to unwrap them."

Howe, who is, as Mr. Brooks truly says, "a poet

all the time," naturally has tried his hand some of the time at being a poet. He has published six books of verse, in which his light and subtle touches enable him to suggest individual graces and to bring fresh charm to classical legends and modern themes.

"Fire of Apple Wood," for example, illustrates the individual quality of his descriptive verse. Through his storm-beaten study windows the poet looks out on the shattered old trees of the orchard. Fragments from them are burning on his hearth.

In embers flushed and embers pale  
Sparkle the blooms of some far spring;  
Of bees and sunshine what a tale  
Told in a moment's flowering!

How swift the flames of gold and blue  
Up from the glowing logs aspire!  
There yellowbird and bluebird flew,  
And oriole, each with wings of fire.

A few of the epigrams with which he has amused himself and delighted others illustrate his wit. A frequent contributor to the *Atlantic*, though not an invariably successful one, he penned a genial quatrain for Bliss Perry during the latter's editorship:

Oh, Perry, in our hours of ease,  
We send you verses — worse than these.  
When backward flows the Atlantic tide,  
'Tis just a case of Bliss denied.

At a dinner in honor of Oliver Wendell Holmes the younger, celebrating his appointment to the Supreme Court, Howe produced the following:—

Wise Judge and kindly autocrat  
Rolled into one — they thought o' that  
Who bore from gilt to marble domes  
The Boston dynasty of Holmes.

His cleverness in parody is demonstrated in lines on John Marquand's *Wickford Point* which were circulated among a few friends soon after the book appeared. Now that the family grudges which the novel did nothing to abate have been aired in court, the rhymes may be released to amuse a larger audience:—

My Wickford, 'tis to thee,  
Soil of the family tree,  
To thee I Point.  
I love thy Brills (or Hales),  
I love their light that fails,  
I love to twist their tails  
Quite out of joint.

The tart flavor of these lines is, however, not characteristic of Howe's verse. His serious poems are inspired by warm feeling and generous sentiment. Those readers who may care to look up his volumes of verse entitled *Harmonies* and *Songs of September* will be rewarded.

A compact figure in sober clothes, round-faced, with grizzled, close-clipped mustache and eyes twinkling benignly behind horn-rimmed spectacles, Mark Howe in his eighty-sixth year might sit for the portrait of the elder brother of the Cheeryble Brothers had Dickens provided them with one. He lives in his apartment on Louisburg Square surrounded by old pictures, old books, old furniture. As editor or biographer he has seen some forty volumes through the press; he has served for long periods on the staffs of the *Atlantic*, the *Youth's Companion*, the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, and the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*.

One of the most considerate of men, he has given practical advice and a helping hand to many a young writer and editor. And he has had the supreme gratification of reading the successful works of his three talented children. His older son, Quincy, editor of several books on contemporaneous matters, well-known news analyst and commentator with the Columbia Broadcasting System, has recently published the massive first volume of a definitive *World History of Our Own Times*. The younger son, Mark, who had a distinguished war record and is now a professor in the Harvard Law School, was secretary to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes almost up to the time of the jurist's death and is writing Mr. Holmes's "authorized" biography. Some confusion may await future historians in distinguishing between two Mark DeWolfe Howes, father and son, as biographers of two Oliver Wendell Holmeses, father and son. Helen, Howe's daughter, comes naturally by the double portion of wit that animates her monologues and novels. To the three, "beloved tutors in adult education," Howe dedicated his delightful autobiography, *A Venture in Remembrance*.

Each May at the annual meeting of the Tavern Club — of which he has been a member for more than fifty years — Howe is called on for his song, "The Presidential Range," commemorating the eight presidents of the club, of whom the first was

Howells, William Dean,  
The Dean of Yankee letters.

In the low-studded dimly lighted dining room, the Dean of Boston letters stands by the piano and trolls out his verses in a voice that is still clear and resonant. And while he sings the stanza about the third president,

The Cambridge Grecian, ever young,  
Our own Charles Eliot Norton,

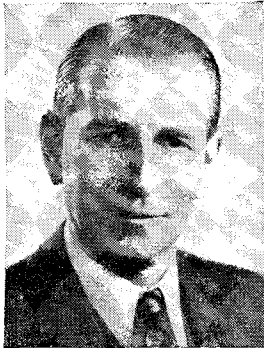
he is quite unaware that the lines

Of golden heart and golden tongue,  
A gold the market's short on,

apply with equal fitness to himself.

# THE ATLANTIC

## Bookshelf



### THE *Peripatetic Reviewer*

BY  
EDWARD  
WEEKS

THERE is an old saying, "Scratch an editor and you'll find a disappointed writer." Nothing could be further from the truth. In the very nature of his work a good editor could not be a disappointed man; he must be a hopeful man. He must have an insatiable zest for reading, and he must wake up every morning, week-ends included, with the hope that in the reading of this day he will discover new talent.

A good editor is half critic, half writer; he should have the ability to detect the strength as well as the weakness in any manuscript, and to help enlarge that strength when need be. Finally, and most important of all, a good editor is instinctive: he has the instinctive ability to put himself in the author's place, and the creative power — not as much as the author's, of course, but enough — to help project that vision of the book the author has seen in his mind.

This instinct was highly developed in **Maxwell E. Perkins**, who was for thirty-seven years an editor of Charles Scribner's Sons and for the last fifteen its editor-in-chief. Max Perkins was, as his associate, John Hall Wheelock, fairly says, "the most creative editor of his time," and to read his perceptive, warmhearted, and painstaking *Editor to Author* (Scribner's, \$3.75) is to realize why a good editor in the heat of his occupation seldom has time to write anything but letters. He has given the full strength of his imagination to the kindling of other people's books.

Like all great editors, Max never had enough of his work. He got to the office at nine in the morning or earlier, worked a long day, and avoided like death the literary cocktail parties whose leaden after-effects would have ruined his evening's reading. No week-end was ever long enough for the manuscripts he took home in his brief case. He begrudged himself a ten-day vacation, and couldn't understand why his secretary or anyone else in the office wanted

more. Once, after a particularly hard spot of work, he allowed himself to be tempted down to Key West by Ernest Hemingway. The first day, Hemingway took him out on the water and Max caught a fish. That evening they sat together drinking and talking over books and the manuscripts to come, but it was only a matter of days before Max was homesick for his work, and back he came two weeks before any associate expected him.

I remember Max in his office. It was a plain little room high up on the corner of 48th Street with the current of Fifth Avenue surging below. Max, a small, neat figure, with taffy coloring and a quiet voice, worked with a bare desk. There might be a pad on it and a few penciled notes — no more. He worked with his hat on, a brown felt hat which must have changed through the years but which always looked the same. Every editor has to cope with a certain number of wound-up visitors, and rumor had it that Max wore his hat to give these long talkers the impression he was about to leave for an appointment. But time was something he never begrudged to those he believed in.

Since few readers ever identify the publishers of their favorite books, let me enumerate some of the talented writers whom Max attracted and helped to develop under the Scribner imprint. He discovered F. Scott Fitzgerald; he found Ring Lardner in journalism, and brought Lardner's stories together in book form; he recognized the enormous potential of Thomas Wolfe after Tom's first novel had been declined by several publishers, and to the editing of *Look Homeward, Angel*, and *Of Time and the River*, he devoted the hardest hours of his career; he coaxed and braced Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings to write *The Yearling* when others were after her for a more commercial novel. With his love of American history he brought knowledgeable help to the historical novels of James Boyd; to the picturesque books of John W. Thomason, Jr., the gifted Marine, and Will James, the cowboy, as to the historical sequence by Marcia Davenport. He edited Erskine Caldwell, the mysteries of S. S. Van Dine, and every big novel by Ernest Hemingway. No other American editor could match this list for its talent and its diversity.

#### How an Editor thinks

The letters which have been gathered together in *Editor to Author* show the diversity; they show Max Perkins's magnetic capacity for appreciation, the devotion to detail, the wise and listening sympathy,



and the shy Yankee diffidence with which Max made his constructive suggestions. The letters have that absorbing, intimate, revealing quality which is the hallmark of every great letter writer. Whether he is counseling a young novelist or advising an elder on his autobiography, or breaking the truth of slow sales to as touchy a subject as John Galsworthy, his words are direct, masculine, and considerate. And above all — this is the point I hope readers (and younger editors) will bear in mind — he was never didactic; he gave his criticism and his suggestions in such a tentative way that the author never felt that he was being censored or his authority challenged.

"Do not ever *defer* to my judgment," he wrote to Scott Fitzgerald. "You won't on any vital point, I know, and I should be ashamed, if it were possible to have made you. . . ." Yet later, when they were going over the manuscript of Fitzgerald's best book, *The Great Gatsby*, it was Max who put his finger on the unnatural mysteriousness which surrounded *Gatsby*, and with his criticism helped to clear the fog away.

To Edward Bok, who was finishing the last volume of his autobiography, he wrote: "I think your books as a whole run the danger of giving the impression that you overvalue *material* success. This book does not, perhaps, as it stands; but, at the same time. . . ." And again he was probing for ways to correct that impression. To James Boyd, who had just finished the manuscript of that fine Revolutionary novel, *Drums*, Max wrote: "In all my comments, my idea is not so much that there are deficiencies, but that you have abilities that might get fuller play." And to Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings he gave this advice: "The sales department always want a novel. They want to turn everything into a novel. They would have turned the New Testament into one, if it had come to us for publication, and they could have. But I am right about it, and a book about a boy and the life of the scrub is the thing we want. Anyhow, the thing for you to do is to write it as you feel it and want it, without regard to anybody at all. It is those wonderful river trips, and the hunting, and the dogs and guns, and the companionship of simple people who care about the same things which were included in 'South Moon Under' that we are thinking about. It is all simple, not complicated — don't let anything make it complicated to you."

The eagle guard with which Max detected the soft spots in any manuscript, and the imagination with which he helped to sustain the best work of his authors, naturally attracted to him many, many aspirants. His letters of rejection are a remarkable blend of firmness and humility, particularly that letter written toward the close of his life to the enraged writer who felt that Scribner's was depriving her of her right to give the world a message — the letter in which he says: "You ask who I am, and I

may as well answer you and have an end to it. I am, or at least should be if I fulfilled myself, John Smith, U.S.A. He is the man who doesn't know much, nor think that he knows much. He starts out with certain ambitions but he gradually accumulates obligations as he goes along. . . ." That, I think, is one of the greatest letters Max ever wrote.

The friendship which grows out of the author-editor relationship sometimes develops a dependency. There are dangers in this, as Max well knew, and in his diffident way he tried to avoid them, but they could not be avoided in the case of Tom Wolfe. Wolfe's first novel, *Look Homeward, Angel*, called for an immense amount of editing. I doubt if the book would have been published without the work Perkins put into it. A more difficult problem presented itself in Wolfe's still larger novel, *Of Time and the River*. When the manuscript was in its next to final stage, the author felt impelled to inject throughout a Marxian philosophy which had not been in his thoughts when he first conceived and wrote the story and which in Perkins's judgment was foreign to the character of the book. Perkins, who had many books on the fire in this particular year, was giving Wolfe two hours every night while this controversy raged, and for long periods they would sit in silence glowering at the manuscript and occasionally at each other. Finally Wolfe said, "Well, then will you take the responsibility?" Perkins replied, "I have simply got to take the responsibility. And what's more," he added, "I will be blamed either way." And he was. For although Wolfe dedicated this novel to his editor in words which still glow, it was the last of his to appear under the Scribner imprint. He took his next novel to Harper's, where, I may add, it received just as toilsome a going over.

There are many other literary controversies which are met with courage in these letters. We see how Max stood up to the onslaught of the Christian Scientists at the time Scribner's published its new biography of Mary Baker Eddy. We see his remarkable letters on the freedom of expression, as when he defends the "realism" of novelists such as Hemingway and Fitzgerald. We see his concern for libel and authors' debts. We see him deal with writers as far apart as Trotsky and Arthur Train. We are grateful to his fellow editor, John Hall Wheelock, who selected and mounted these letters about which I have only one small regret. I think Max would have liked us to see a few of his mistakes. For no editor is infallible.

#### Small town, big town

*The Boys from Sharon* by Louise Field Cooper (Harper, \$2.75) is an ingratiating short novel which puts me in mind of a somewhat more mature version of *Helen's Babies*. To a loveless, pompous old mansion in Sharon, Connecticut, come the two young Invaders — George, aged eight, the



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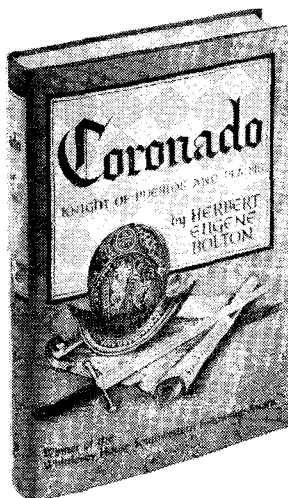
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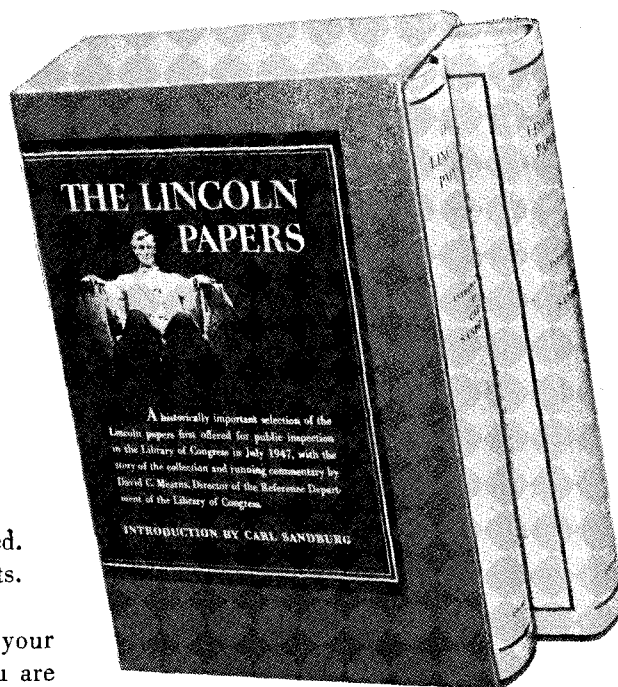
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adventurous one, and Lucius, aged twelve, his more discriminating brother. They have been taken in for a week's visit while their parents are in Bermuda, and the fun of the thing is to see what they do to the house and its inmates.

The Invaded consist of Mrs. Fanning, "a narrow, cylindrical, upright figure with an unsleeping civic conscience." As her niece says, "She never *wanted* to have children. . . . She's just the mother of committees, that's what she is." The second of the household is Mr. Forrest Howe, an old cabbage who has vegetated so long on his sister's money that he no longer has any desire but to eat and sleep. And third is his tall, not bad-looking daughter Edith, who is hungry for love, who has no job, and whose self-defense and loneliness are fast building her into a shell. The household is run with all the lugubrious Victorian solemnity which money and maids can afford, and not until the boys arrive and let in, along with the fresh air, a certain black-visored instructor from the near-by university does Edith have any chance of escape.

The boys are as a woman imagined them, sensitive and capricious, rather than boisterous. Anna, the Swedish maid, is a comedian with a lovely accent, and the two overstuffed elders are, as they were intended to be, the targets of some of Miss Cooper's nicest irony. Very pleasant, nicely phrased, and light.

Having made friends and irritants by his country cousin chronicle, *The Proper Bostonians*, **Cleveland Amory** now comes up with a satirical scrutiny of the promotion racket as it flourishes among publishers in New York City. *Home Town* (Harper, \$3.00) is the story built around Mitchell Hickok (no relation to Wild Bill, as he keeps protesting), who has pasted together a book from his columns in the Fairfax, Arizona, *Flyer*, and who has been brought on to New York for promotion by his publishers, Hathaway House.

The novel gets off to a slow start chiefly because Bill Devereux, the publicity man for Hathaway, is such a caricature that not until he gets out of the spotlight does the action come to life. But the moment Mitch walks onto the stage all is well. Mitch Hickok is a natural. Gin, his New York girl, says of him, "Darling, you fool everybody. . . . You don't look as if you even know where you're going but you always land on your feet." Mitch is six feet three, rather unprepossessing, with glasses, but he has an unsurpassed vocabulary of Western idiom, an unspoiled appetite for New York, and an unusually honest reaction to the razzle-dazzle of cocktail parties, radio interviews, women's clubs, television, and blondes with bombsight hair. Mr. Amory was Managing Editor of an evening paper in Arizona, and later the author of a provocative book: both halves of this experience contribute to the refreshing satire in this, his first novel.

## Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO

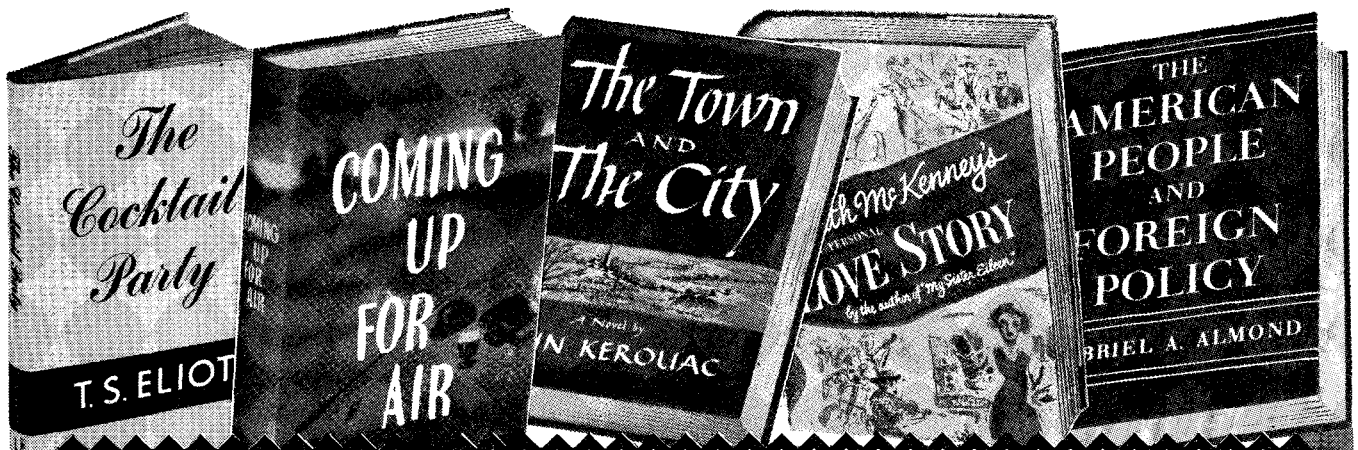


In an essay on Shakespeare, Walter Bagehot, quoting an account of hare-hunting in *Venus and Adonis*, observes: "It is absurd to say that we know nothing about the man who wrote that: we know that he had been after a hare." This hazardous line of reasoning informs a little book on Shakespeare by Alfred Duff Cooper, who sets out to prove that Shakespeare served as a soldier in the Low Countries under the Earl of Leicester in 1585, and that he rose to the rank of Sergeant. Deduction of the same order leads William Bliss — a gentleman endowed with awesome erudition and a capricious imagination — to advance the contentions that Shakespeare, at the age of thirteen, sailed around the world with Drake; that later he made a trading voyage to the Mediterranean, was shipwrecked in the Gulf of Trieste, and was taken by his rescuers to Venice; that he must have committed several murders; and that he did not, as traditionally supposed, earn his living as an actor ("The speech of Hamlet to the players is not the speech of an actor; it is the speech of an author whose withers have been wrung by hearing his lines mouthed"). A third new book about Shakespeare, by **Marchette Chute** — a refreshingly down-to-earth biographer — pictures him as a working member of the London theater throughout most of his life; and, I might add, makes no mention of soldiering or foreign travel.

Miss Chute's *Shakespeare of London* (Dutton, \$4.00), a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, differs from other biographies in that it is based solely on the documents of Shakespeare's time: the latest source material used dates back to the second decade after Shakespeare's death, and no biographical deductions are made on the basis of "internal evidence" within the plays. The book is presented as "an attempt to show William Shakespeare as his contemporaries saw him, rather than as the legendary figure he has become since . . . an attempt at a life-sized portrait."

This estimable venture has been conscientiously executed and achieves very worth-while results, but I can't quite subscribe to John Mason Brown's comment on the jacket: "She captures a man and brings him back alive." No biographer can hope to play Frank Buck to William Shakespeare: the tracks he left behind, though not as scarce as com-





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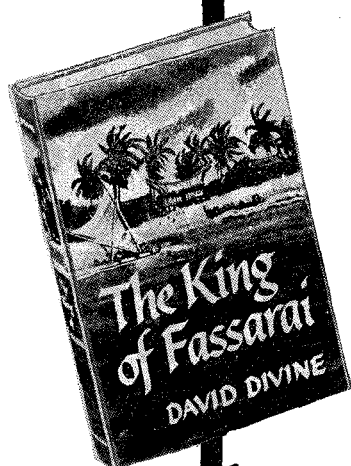
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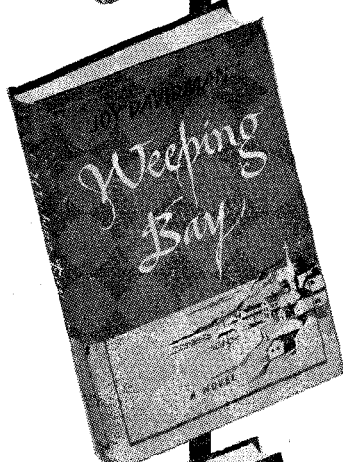
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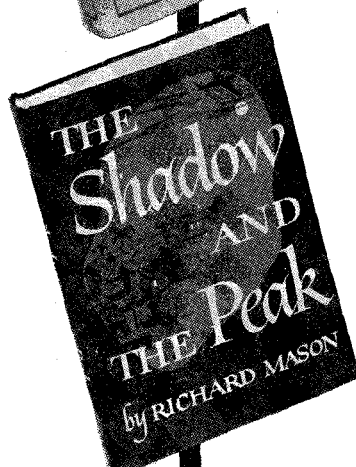
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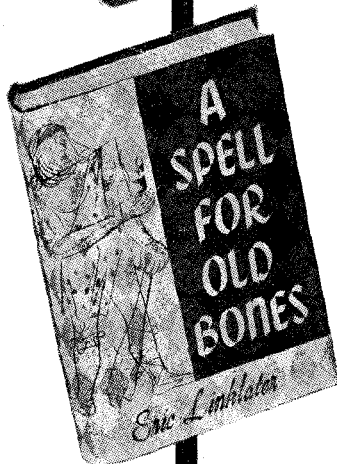
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monly supposed, are far from sufficient for anyone to bring back to us the living man. What Miss Chute does bring to life in multifarious detail is not Shakespeare of London but the London of Shakespeare — its sights and sounds; its religious outlook, laws and mores; its court; its brutal amusements; its reading tastes (anthologies and self-help books were the favorites); and, above all, its immensely vital world of the theater. Fitted into this painstakingly recreated background, Shakespeare's career certainly takes shape in clearer perspective.

Whether any of Miss Chute's biographical facts will be new to Shakespearean scholars I cannot judge; the point is a minor one, since this is clearly a book written for the general reader. It tells us a good deal about Shakespeare's family and his father's rise to gentility. It weaves into a connected story the fragmentary data about Shakespeare's long and close association with Burbage's company, and enables us to glimpse the considerable standing he enjoyed in London and, in later years, in Stratford. It documents his numerous investments in real estate, which show that he became decidedly affluent. Among the clues to Shakespeare's character, perhaps the most substantial are the indications that he was a careful, judicious man in business matters; his will is one of the most meticulous of the period.

In a brief appendix on the *Sonnets*, Miss Chute concludes — as Leslie Hotson did in his article in the December *Atlantic* — that the rigid social distinctions of the time make it inconceivable that the publisher's dedication to "Mr. W. H." should refer to the Earls of Pembroke or Southampton (Miss Chute has no candidates). A second appendix attacks various Shakespearean legends, among them the story that when first he came to London, he held horses for the customers outside the theaters; and the persistent legend that he left Stratford because of trouble over deer-poaching — Duff Cooper suggests that this is what caused him to join the army.

Miss Chute's diligent curiosity and solid good sense are not matched by any distinction of style; and, while I'm no zealot on the subject of footnotes, I found it disconcerting to encounter so many quotations wandering around unidentified. All in all, though, *Shakespeare of London* is a



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valuable and absorbing chronicle. It should please and enlighten a great many readers.

William Bliss's book, a choice exemplar of the fancy speculations in which Shakespearean commentators have indulged, is whimsically entitled *The Real Shakespeare: A Counterblast to Commentators* (Macmillan, \$3.00); and it purports to rescue its subject from the extravagances in which he has been engulfed. I have already noted some of the extravagant claims made in the course of Mr. Bliss's rescue operation; the reasoning behind them is ingenious and plausible but, to my mind, highly inconclusive. The book is written in the form of a dialogue between the author and his learned *Doppelgänger* Eugenius, both of whom are given to a pedantic jocularity which I found inordinately painful.

Mr. Bliss's intellectual virtuosity enables him to deduce with confidence the games that Shakespeare played as a boy; his taste in women; his foreign travels and a good many other matters, such as the fact that in a less bigoted age he would have been a practicing Catholic. This author unquestionably captures a man and, quite literally, brings him back alive in the last chapter, attired "in Elizabethan doublet and hose, very point-device, and with lace about the neck." I would lay ten to one that his man is not "the real Shakespeare."

Alfred Duff Cooper's *Sergeant Shakespeare* (Viking, \$2.50) is likewise an exercise in ingenious speculation, which ends, however, on the disarming note: "I have almost convinced myself." The author, a former British Cabinet Minister — he has been said, by the way, to be a better scholar than politician — credits Shakespeare with a year of campaign service across the Channel, and adduces some amusing arguments to prove that he must have been a Sergeant. Duff Cooper's book, which touches on several other points about Shakespeare, is a rather engaging if unsubstantial item.

### The dangers of playing safe

In a long essay on writing that prefaces his latest collection of short stories — *The Assyrian* (Harcourt, Brace, \$3.50) — William Saroyan talks about taking chances and playing it safe. "To do good writing," he says, "is the easiest thing in the world for a writer provided he is willing or able to stay firmly located, or in other



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words play safe. . . . The more a man grows, the more he tries to grow . . . the more difficult it becomes for him to do work that satisfies him."

The argument, in effect, is that arrested development is conducive to good writing, a notion which — as evidenced by Saroyan's career and that of several other prominent American writers — may be valid in the short run but eventually exacts severe penalties. For even Saroyan has found it impossible to arrest development indefinitely; and, having too long remained "located" as the mindless young man on the flying trapeze, at forty-two he is thoroughly unsettled by the first, belated twinges of maturity. Saroyan is now tired of playing safe and is clearly troubled about his writing.

He made his name, of course, as a writer who took chances, an innovator. Into the heavy atmosphere of the mid-thirties, he projected an exuberant vision of life, a tender, spontaneous gaiety, and a highly personal style. But his outlook hardened, rather rapidly, into a formula. And as time went by, the formula began to look increasingly juvenile and sentimental; at its worst, intolerably "cute." In nine of the ten stories in this volume, Saroyan tells us, he played safe, stuck to the formula. Seven of the nine, however, remained unsold and it's easy to see why: they just aren't particularly good. Two or three, especially "The Parsley Garden," show pleasant traces of Saroyan's special gifts, and that's about the best I can say.

The trouble with writers who play safe too long is that when they get ambition, when they reach out for what Saroyan calls "the tough stuff," they aren't equipped to cope with it meaningfully. John O'Hara's *A Rage to Live* was a case in point. Applied to a large canvas, his patented tough-guy truculence — effective over a limited range — betrayed its poverty of mind and imagination, its tastelessness and essential naïveté.

Naïveté is also Saroyan's undoing in the one story in *The Assyrian* — a novelette with that title — which, as he puts it, "takes a real chance." *The Assyrian* is a study of a famous, fifty-year-old American writer of Assyrian descent — boozy, unsuccessful in his third marriage, and generally washed up — who is shown gambling away his last dollars in Lisbon and is left boarding a plane for the land of his forefathers, knowing that his

heart is ready to give out. The tale has its good points, but the "tough stuff" in it — the writer's attempt to understand himself and the world — is not one of them. His reflections are for the most part a banal mixture of glib cynicism, sentimentality, and sententious nothings, such as: "He knew they (the intelligent posers) had failed even more profoundly; he did not feel superior; and he did not feel pity for them; he simply felt that it was all right, they were all right."

### Love in Mayfair

One novelist who has always taken risks is the English writer **Henry Green**. Each of his eight novels has been a bold departure from its predecessors, and most of them have been utterly unlike anything else being written. First published in this country at the end of the twenties and then lost sight of, Henry Green — in private life Henry Vincent Yorke, a very successful businessman — was reintroduced last fall with *Loving*, one of the handsomest literary products of 1949. Now we are offered a new Green novel with, as always, a one-word title, in this case a startling one: *Nothing* (Viking, \$3.00). Green modestly describes the book as "a frivolous comedy of manners," and certainly it is the least ambitious of his works: the lightest and the nearest to being conventional in its plotting and subject matter. I had better add right here that it seems to me an unqualified success, an entrancing performance that should win Henry Green new readers.

Loosely speaking, *Nothing* might be described as a sequel to the sociological reports authored by such connoisseurs of Mayfair as Michael Arlen, Noel Coward, and Evelyn Waugh. Henry Green has turned an acute and mischievous eye on young love and middle-aged liaisons in the Mayfair of 1948, where the impoverished rich can only just afford such essentials as luncheons at the Ritz, and can't do much to help out their sons and daughters who, coming of age under Socialism, have gone to work as drudges in the bureaucracy. With delicate irony, Green registers the accompanying changes in the moral climate, and these changes are decidedly piquant.

Now the older generation, in the eyes of its offspring, is frivolous, selfish, and "absolutely unbridled" about sex. The young people are earnest, public-spirited, and distinctly

prudish. They are also loyal to their filial responsibilities, though frequently disgusted by their elders' disheveled morals. "They ought to be liquidated. Every one of our parents' generation," exclaims a twenty-one-year-old, otherwise devoted to his mother. "They're wicked . . . they're rotten to the core." His mother, for her part, worries about her son's high-principled attitude toward young women, and before leaving for a week-end brazenly presses him to take advantage of her empty house and stock of Chianti.

The plot is one that might well have been devised by Noel Coward, but Green's handling of it is further proof that here is an authentic artist with an altogether distinctive touch. John Pomfret, a widower of forty-five, is the lover of Liz Jennings, a good-looking spinster of twenty-nine. Jane Weatherby, a widow who once had a considerable love affair with Pomfret, is now in possession of Dick Abbot, a Blimpish type susceptible to choking fits in moments of deep feeling. John's daughter, Mary, and Jane's son, Philip, who work in the same office, fall in love and become engaged. At this point Mrs. Weatherby — a matron whose fluttery speech belies her guile — starts to play an extremely devious hand, and plays it with such finesse that by barely noticeable stages all of the amorous relationships are drastically revised.

In studies of the previous era, it was customary for the bright young things to win the day — often, admittedly, at the cost of self-destruction. But in this, too, times seem to have changed: Philip and Mary are the losers, and the "wicked" parents are left cozily and complacently entwined in each other's arms.

Of course, none of this really conveys the book's excellence, which lies in the freshness and "rightness" of Green's vision — he simultaneously surprises and convinces — in the subtlety of humor which stems from this vision and the unfailing felicity of the writing. Green's gift for description is much less in evidence here than in *Loving*, but the dialogue is marvelously amusing. The novel's surface ripples throughout with comedy that is never mere verbal virtuosity. Comedy that is intimately bound up with the revelation of character.

### Original sin

Another writer who belongs among the risk-takers is Green's compatriot,

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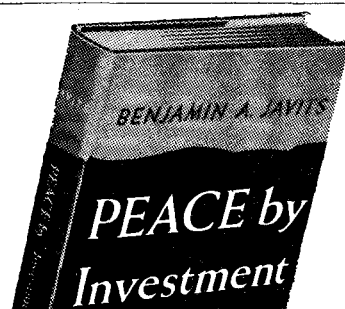
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## PEACE BY INVESTMENT

by Benjamin A. Javits

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Rex Warner, whose boldly imaginative novels — *The Wild Goose Chase*, *The Professor*, *The Aerodrome* — have tackled the largest issues of the past two decades. Warner's last book dramatized the pragmatic advantages of the philosophy of power and its terrible perversion of human life. In *Men of Stones* (Lippincott, \$2.75), Warner again focuses on the authoritarian idea, but now the argument advances further into theology.

This politico-religious novel, so immensely of our time, is attired in the vestments of weird melodrama. The setting is an island prison of an unnamed European country which has just emerged from civil war; and the novel's dominant figure is the prison Governor, a satanic, spell-binding genius who aspires to "organize the Good Life throughout the world" by making himself a new incarnation of God. "The Good Life, the good citizen," he says, "are by-products of faith," but faith has been destroyed in the name of progress, leaving man burdened with uncertainty and guilt — "Mankind is happy only in submission to a superior power." Like the executioner in Kafka's story, *The Penal Colony*, the Governor argues that men worship "precisely that which is not bound down to standards of thought and behavior which are familiar to them." By a program of arbitrary cruelty and arbitrary benevolence, he has succeeded, before the novel opens, in becoming God to his prisoners. And now he is almost ready to set this band of disciples free to proselytize throughout the world.

The story gets under way with the arrival on the island of Mr. Goat, a member of a foreign cultural mission, who has been invited to stage a performance of *King Lear* by the prisoners, and is swept into a passionate love affair with the Governor's wife. Halfway through the book, Warner introduces the Governor's younger brother, Marcus, who, after abominable experiences in a foreign concentration camp, returns to his homeland a fearless mystic in the company of the worldly Captain Nicholas, an epicurean humanist. Warner's comment on these various viewpoints is articulated in a chain of fantastic and horrifying events, which it wouldn't be fair to go into.

If I understand the book rightly, it dramatizes the belief that the source of evil is man's ambition to be more than man, his *hubris* or over-

weening pride; that evil is inescapable; and that it is the ground stuff of philosophies of power — all of which looks rather like the doctrine of original sin. Warner has a good deal more to say which I won't attempt to paraphrase, since the crux of a novel is not its ideas but the effectiveness of their symbolic presentation.

*Men of Stones*, I'm afraid, left me with awkwardly mixed feelings. The novel's theme is arresting, its conception audacious, and it has stretches of brilliant argument, an undercurrent of excitement, and a powerfully suggested atmosphere of the bizarre. But the book is seriously flawed. High expectations are aroused in the first encounters with the Governor; then Warner loosens his grip by introducing, at mid-point, a considerable subplot centering on Marcus. And thereafter the book tends to become diffuse; its meaning is blurred by seeming irrelevancies. Granted this weakness, *Men of Stones* remains one of the more interesting of the recent novels.

The problem of evil also constitutes the "inner life" of an Italian novel, *The Short Cut* (Pellegrini & Cudahy, \$3.00); here, however, the problem is not subjected to intellectual analysis but remains hauntingly implicit throughout — a felt presence, powerfully evoked by the novel's sinister setting, the landscape of Ethiopia. This book by **Ennio Flaiano**, fluently translated by Stuart Hood, can be added to the list of superior titles which have reached us from Italy since the war. The time of the action is just after the conclusion of fighting in Ethiopia, and the story is pinpointed on a young Italian Lieutenant who finds himself projected into a nightmare sequence of crime.

When his truck overturns on the bend of a mountain, the Lieutenant decides to look for a short cut back to camp through the jungle and gets lost. Emerging into a clearing, he comes upon a young native girl bathing in a pool. He is a conqueror, a *signore*, and there is no obstacle to his desire. Profoundly stirred by the girl's beauty and primitivism, he lingers with Mariam a second night, during which, firing at a prowling shadow, he hits her sleeping body. If he is found by the natives beside the dying girl, they will surely kill him; to take her to an Italian hospital would involve him in serious trouble,

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## OUT IN THE MID-DAY SUN

wrote *The Leopard Hunt* which appeared in THE ATLANTIC in November 1949. Of her book about her life in India *The Philadelphia Inquirer* said: "Enthralling... filled with fascinating pictures of an exotic country."

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and, anyhow, the wound is clearly fatal. He shoots her through the head, carefully buries her, and goes back to camp.

From this starting point, Ennio Flaiano has fashioned an impassioned tale — saturated in terror, mystery, and hallucination — of a man who tries to escape from his guilt only to encounter it wherever he turns: in the person of an old man, with something of Mariam in his eyes, who seems to be following him; in the words of a doctor who casually alludes to miraculous recoveries from wounds that seem fatal; in the feel of a letter in his pocket from his sweetheart, which reminds him of another betrayal; and, most appallingly, in the appearance of a leprosy-looking nodule on his hand, which convinces him that his crime has condemned him to a living death.

Wholly possessed by the bare idea of survival, he robs the man who befriends him, lays a death trap for a fellow officer, and then, when escape to Italy is within reach, he finds himself impelled to turn back and takes the short cut into the jungle. There he comes to accept his weakness and his guilt. Ready to forfeit his life, he eventually returns to camp to find that his terrible journey through Limbo has, finally, been "touched by grace."

### "Time of troubles"

*An Essay for Our Times* (Knopf, \$2.75) by H. Stuart Hughes, Associate Professor of History at Harvard and grandson of the late Chief Justice, fortifies a suspicion that's been creeping up on me that, in ratiocinative works or "think pieces," the density of sound thought is apt to vary in inverse ratio to the length — the shorter the book, the larger the yield. Mr. Hughes's book — "a modest effort to situate our current dilemmas in their broader historical context" — runs to only 188 pages or roughly 47,000 words. The ground he manages to cover and the amount he manages to say are quite astonishing.

The book opens with a compact survey of the new irrationalist temper in thought and the growing doubts as to the survival of Western civilization: here the author discusses some of the main ideas of Spengler, Toynbee, Freud, Jung, and others. He then relates this concisely to the "nightmare" picture that emerges from the works of the novelists — Proust, Joyce, Kafka, Woolf, Mann,

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Sartre. Part II is political and deals with the transmutation of Marxism into Stalinism; the "tottering" of the center parties in Europe, especially France and Italy; and the continuance of fascism "under new forms," a topic too readily by-passed by political analysts nowadays. The third part is devoted to the position of the United States.

The prevalent belief that the United States is moving in the direction of Socialism is sharply contradicted in Hughes's analysis. He suggests that pretty soon the direction of both parties will be in the hands of "sophisticated" ("enlightened") conservatives. He stresses, too, the essential conservatism of U.S. union leadership: the tendency is for the leaders of business and labor to "reach mutually favorable agreements at the expense of the public." The present relations between business, government, and the labor leaders, Hughes argues, represents a drift toward a kind of Corporatism.

In writing about Communism, Hughes reminds us of the fallacy of thinking of Communism as simply a Russian disease. It is one manifestation of the disease from which our society, too, is suffering: the Western and Orthodox (Russian) civilizations are now in what Toynbee has called the "time of troubles." This is a sound enough point, but I feel that elsewhere, in his striving for objectivity, Mr. Hughes tends to be rather "soft" on the subject of Russian policy.

One of the most valuable aspects of this little book is that each topic is discussed in the widest possible (not simply the historical) context. Mr. Hughes is not just damning the politicians when he so tellingly remarks: "The characteristic statesman of today is a conscientious mediocrity crushed under the weight of responsibilities to which he feels himself unequal. In the place of thoughts, his public utterances offer pious hopes and sentimental generalities." Hughes's point is that knowledge has become so specialized in every field, and the pressure of daily affairs so great, that most people have given up the struggle to master the intellectual currents of the age. The lowering of university standards has further encouraged the trend toward mediocrity. Mr. Hughes concludes that a nation which must take the lead in world affairs needs special educational facilities for training an elite.

## Potpourri

**CHARLES DICKENS AND EARLY VICTORIAN ENGLAND** by R. J. Cruikshank. Chanticleer Press, \$4.50.

Summing up the Victorian age, Mr. Cruikshank writes: "Its intellectual curiosity, its moral obliquities, its economic anarchy, its political wisdom, its culture, its cruelty, its sensitiveness — all these were of a piece." They are discerningly pieced together in Mr. Cruikshank's crowded volume. The author, editor of the London *News Chronicle*, is thoroughly steeped both in Dickens and in Dickens's England, and he writes about both with considerable verve, a distinctive style, and a critical eye. His handsomely illustrated book is a delightful piece of informal history.

**A WREATH AND A CURSE** by Donald Wetzel. Crown, \$2.50.

Mr. Wetzel's first novel, an allegory of man's apathy and stupidity in the face of certain disaster, centers on the efforts of a ten-year-old, Willie, to persuade his family to take action against the steady crumbling of the riverbank beside which their house stands, before the arrival of the autumn floods. Dad dodges his responsibility with a letter to the legislature. Mother, immersed in the household routine, cheerfully leaves the responsibility to God. Their married daughter, obsessed with her own beauty and shoddy emotions, doesn't know the meaning of responsibility. And her husband, an engineer, can't think beyond the gadgets in his workshop. The family's drift toward catastrophe and the small boy's pathetic struggle to build a wall against the river are narrated by Willie's crippled elder brother, an impotent and bitter spectator.

Mr. Wetzel's tale is skillfully charged throughout with the tension of impending doom.

**THE NINE LIVES OF EUROPE** by Leo Lania. Funk & Wagnalls, \$3.50.

Mr. Lania's book is "a combination of a report on the present economic and political conditions of Europe and an analysis of its spiritual and intellectual development since the end of the war." The chief new information it has to offer is the notes on post-war European writing. As a commentator, Mr. Lania scores his freshest points, rather surprisingly, in the pages on Britain; he is weakest when pontificating on how to win the cold war (his reasoning implies that the Russians would abide by agreements).

Mr. Lania, who is starry-eyed in comparison with today's chastened liberals, sees in democratic socialism the "new living faith" that will cure Europe's spiritual malaise.

*The Nine Lives of Europe* is moderately interesting in places, but poorly put together throughout.



# ACCENT ON LIVING



THE allure of a salted peanut — even a salted peanut in prime condition — is something that many of us can muster enough will power to resist.

I doubt that the guests would sulk and whisper about the hostess if she did not offer peanuts. Poets and romantics have found no reason for hymning the peanut; the literature of the subject is nil; as an “appetizer” or hors d’œuvre, the peanut is about the equivalent of a graham cracker — gah.

I realize that Smithfield ham is supposed to benefit from peanut vines, that peanut butter is the pillar of the American school lunch, that a vegetarian would rather sit down to a peanut pie than to squab turkey. But the average adult, sampling a pale manzanilla or a worthy whiskey or a suitable cocktail, can forgo the peanut without real hardship.

Let me break off to include in these misgivings the potato chip, the sun-fast yellow popcorn, the woozies, cheezettes, krispados, funzies, whimsies, toasterinos, and kraxies. These proprietary substances are usually yellow,<sup>1</sup> but we can only guess whether from the addition of egg products, corn, a non-fading but nameless cheese, or a non-poisonous vegetable dye. They all taste alike

<sup>1</sup>These things seem to be available also in pink, green, blue, and other colors.

## THIS MONTH

too — a faint flavor of light yellow; consistency: chalk.

I have recently encountered still another foodstuff intended for cocktail use: a kind of imitation bacon in appearance, deflavored artfully of all but a whiff of salt, and tending to dissolve and vanish immediately on being chewed, like the spun sugar once sold in gigantic paper cones in amusement parks. It comes in a can, and thus its nothingness is kept absolutely fresh right up to the moment of serving.

There may be people who wouldn’t take a drink without chewing one or another of these delicacies to powder at the same time. I do not seek to abridge their privilege.

What I do suggest to all hostesses of the krispy-krunchy persuasion is that they throw the leftovers away. That’s where the trouble lies — the leftovers. The facts: —

Helen Y, housewife, gives a small cocktail party, with peanuts and other

appetizers from the handy, convenient, easy-to-serve, no-fuss-and-bother tin containers on her shelf. For the same outlay she could serve a big slab of sharp, unpasteurized, aged New York cheese and a plate of saltines and let the guests help themselves, but no matter. Helen is a peanut and toasterino girl. She dresses up her bowls of peanuts by scattering a few cashews and pecans on top, simulating what the nut stores call the Luxury Assortment.

There are never any leftovers of cashews and pecans, so this addition does not complicate the problem of leftovers. (Some guests will burrow through bowl after bowl of the Luxury Assortment in their search for that last cashew.)

After the party, Helen finds she still possesses one pound of peanuts and one peck of toasterinos. Instead of throwing them away, she puts them back in their tins.

Two weeks later, Helen gives another party. Aware that the appetizers are staler, by two weeks, than they were, she conscientiously gives them a turn in the oven. This, she believes, will freshen them up. In truth, the oven merely seals in and reaffirms the staleness. Helen now adds an equal amount of fresh peanuts and toasterinos bought that very day, plus the display cashews and pecans.

Again the guests, the drinks, the

burrowings for the souvenir cashew. Again the leftovers.

By the time Helen gives her third party, her appetizers comprise vintage materials as follows: one fourth of the offering is four weeks old and has been reheated twice, one fourth is two weeks old and has been reheated once, and one half is in putative corner-store-fresh condition.

From this point on, several variables in Helen's mixture (the diminishing remnants of the first, the second and successive batches of peanuts and toasterinos) are approaching a constant — zero. But like the grasshopper that never gets across the bridge, or the train that is unable, mathematically, to enter the station, the original and early ingredients will dwindle along in Helen's bowls with-

out ever actually reaching extinction.

Years later, some guest will munch all unsuspecting an elderly peanut that has survived, phoenix-like, countless refreshenings in Helen's oven. It will taste like a pellet of plaster of Paris flavored with Copenhagen snuff, and so will many of its near neighbors in Helen's Luxury Assortment. The less said about vintage toasterinos the better, but like the peanut's, their distinctive bouquet will dominate whatever the company happens to be drinking.

And now a final word on the potato chip. Avocado, put through a sieve and enlivened with lemon juice and garlic, is a perfectly good "spread" for an appetizer. But the potato chip — aside from all the ills mentioned above — is structurally too frail a

scoop for the avocado mixture. It breaks off, leaving the guest with an end fragment, no avocado, and a sense of frustration. A butter spreader and saltines would be a better scheme.

Helen Y, I am happy to report, has stopped saving old nuts, chips, and crackers masquerading as something else. The last time I saw her she was scoring heavily with a terrific novelty of her own invention: a couple of loaves of rye bread; a bowl of unsalted butter; a platter of sliced corned beef; a bowl of chopped onions. The guests were allowed to combine these items as they saw fit in what is called a "sandwich." One of the more brilliant small parties of the winter season, people say.

CHARLES W. MORTON

## LIFE IN A PARIS SUBURB

by **RAOUL SIMPKINS**

*RAOUL SIMPKINS is the pseudonym of a former British diplomat who is now living in France. The concluding installment — on telephone operators and firemen, as well as marketing — of this account of the pleasures of life in the outskirts of Paris will appear in the May Atlantic.*

WHEN we first reached Paris last spring, after three years in Washington, my wife and I were faced with the problem, disheartening enough all over the world since the war, of finding a place to live. The matter is made even more formidable in Paris for various reasons.

These include (1) a French law which says that unfurnished houses and flats must stay at rentals fixed not very much above those of the dear, dead days of 1914. Naturally tenants badly squeezed by the rising cost of living in every other field — the government refers to them, with straight-faced politeness, as "the economically feeble ones" — hang on grimly to houses for which they may be paying as little as \$57 a year. (I am taking the current exchange rate of 350 francs to the dollar throughout this report.)

But (2) no such ceiling applies to furnished premises. So the French, never averse from picking up on the swings what may have been dropped on the roundabouts, have been letting their imaginations run riot in naming

rentals for furnished places. And unfortunately (3) Paris, what with the Marshall Plan people and many another handsomely staffed U.S. government or international mission, is full of Americans eager to gratify these fabulous demands with dollars and without argument.

(4) There has been little new hous-



ing put up in the past quarter of a century; and finally (5) France is the squatter's paradise. It is next to impossible to secure a court eviction order against anybody, unless you are able to promise alternative accommodation — *with which the potential evictee declares his complete satisfaction*. And of course this is nearly always out of the question.

Often enough in those dreary weeks of house hunting, my wife would see a place which on first inspection not

only seemed to have nothing wrong with it, but even appeared to be precisely what we sought. She might be aware, while going over it, that there were two or three unsavory-looking characters shuffling about in one of the top-floor rooms, but she took them to be caretakers. It was only when we started talking terms that the owner would say, with elaborate nonchalance, "And you would not, I feel sure, be greatly incommoded by the Lesmoines on the top floor. Their children cry but rarely, and they have been told to use the main staircase as little as possible." Knowing that the Lesmoines might quite easily elect to stay on for good, we used at that point to lose interest.

Another large drawback was provided by the antics of the departing Germans. There was a lovely house at Marly-le-Roi. It had been inhabited at various times by Louis XIV, the actress Rachel — and the Wehrmacht. From the outside it was a dream. Inside a nightmare. Water pipes had been wrenched from walls; bathtubs forced through floors; trucks driven into drawing rooms, and so on. We reckoned that repairs — taking many months — would about equal the asking price for the house.

Things began to look desperate. The school holidays were drawing near. Soon four children would descend on us from England. So against our better judgment we closed with

the owner of a hideous but huge edifice in a horsy suburb, twenty minutes by train to the west of Paris. The owner wanted to sell for \$20,000, but we persuaded him to rent it for a year's trial. (To begin with, I do not possess \$20,000; secondly, the Bank of England would not let me take it to France if I did; lastly, we didn't like this weirdly decorated sanctuary sufficiently to regard it as a permanent factor in our lives.)

The place — it is what the French call a villa — was a frenzy of bad taste. Inside, it ran the gamut from imitation Versailles to genuine Bourse. Outside, it had mauve-painted crenellations, imitation wooden beams made of cement, and a strange tower perched at one end. For the \$1375 a year rental (plus a forfeit of \$575 if we fail to renew next year) we get in addition to these dubious adornments a strongly built, eleven-room, three-story house, with bathroom, big kitchen, wine cellar, roomy basement laundry, two-acre garden (very well arranged, in contrast to the house), and a cement tennis court rather the worse for wear from an RAF bomb. There are also a detached lodge-keeper's house of three rooms and a two-car garage.

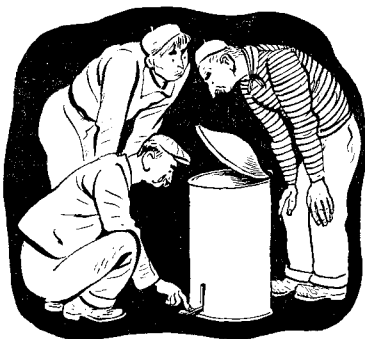
The first thing, obviously, was to obscure the mauve paint on the outside and the brown paint which was the favored color for the interior. We called in a genial chap who came along with two assistants and a water boy. He shook his head a bit when we said we wanted the cement beams outside the tower painted a neutral color.

"That tower's higher than I usually go," he pointed out. "It means ladders — extra-long ones. Cost you more." In the end he did a workman-like job for \$110, plus \$15 for ladderage.

On investigation the property proved to contain a delightfully varied orchard. There were, in due season, apples, pears, peaches, plums, raspberries, wild strawberries, gooseberries, grapes, and excellent little walnuts. The couple who inhabited the lodge-keeper's house, and who were allowed to cultivate a small kitchen garden below the battered tennis court, kept us up to scratch in the matter of garnering these rich

harvests. No waste was tolerated. No windfalls stayed long on the ground.

The couple insisted, over my mild objections, on our making cider with our surplus apples. When I said that I did not propose to buy a cider press, they arranged for their cousin in the next suburb to crush our apples in his. Also to lend us one of his barrels.



Then the problem of getting the barrel, now full and very heavy, back to us cropped up.

"I have it," said Madame to my wife. "You have need of the plumber anyway. Get him in and leave the rest to me."

The plumber, who owns a car, was duly called in to deal with a leaking faucet. Just as he was finishing, Madame started in on him with a mixture of blandishment and open bullying. Soon, with only a token grumble, he was off in his car to fetch our cider keg.

But in one respect we became known as "those improvident British." My wife flatly refused to pick the lime keys off the enormous lime tree behind the house. "But *tilleul*" (a straw-colored "infusion" made of lime keys and hot water, greatly esteemed by the French) "is rightly venerated as a sovereign cure for the congested liver," protested Madame vainly. "Very well then, I shall myself garner these scandalously neglected keys." She did, too.

The garden is taken care of by a scarecrow-thin and taciturn young man who does an excellent job for 20 cents an hour. He cleans floors inside the house as well. His sister, just as taciturn, helps with the housework, at 18 cents an hour. This gardener is, like Madame the Lodge-keeper, very much against waste. He uses the contents of our garbage can — euphoni-ously called a *poubelle* in French — which he laboriously totes down to the far end of our territory, to stimulate our compost heap. But he confesses himself baffled by empty sardine cans.

"Can't find any use for these," he mutters morosely.

The electricians were the biggest bane of those early weeks. Two young men would call, with every appearance of getting down to the many tasks urgently awaiting them — hooking up the new refrigerator, installing

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the electric water-heater, putting in a front-door bell, and so forth. But after an hour or so their stamina would always seem to run out abruptly.



Murmuring excuses, they would vanish, the job part done, to return no more that day or — very likely — the day after.

They paid nearly twenty visits all told before things were more or less in working order, and for days the trade name of "Tropicale" stamped upon our water-heater remained a silent mockery, since the bath water, obstinately unconnected with the heater, stayed glacial. One of the electricians finally produced the classic story of a dying grandmother and vanished permanently. Meanwhile a trench had been dug just outside the front door to receive a cable for the nonexistent front bell. And night after night, hurrying home in the dark, I would forgetfully fall into this hazard.

The electricians' bill, including materials and a good deal of serialized work, totted up to \$125.50.

In contrast to this, the five men who, in three hours of concentrated hard work, carried into and distributed about the place a whole houseful of our furniture from England showed remarkable efficiency as well as great strength. One of them would whip up two flights of stairs whistling cheerily, a full wardrobe trunk clutched lightly to his midriff.

The only thing that momentarily seduced them from their fanatic devotion to duty was the U.S.-style kitchen trash can, with the foot treadle for lifting the lid. This they had never seen the like of, and they delightedly set traps for one another with it, suddenly jerking up the lid to strike a guilelessly investigating colleague smartly on the nose.

The local upholsterer did a lovely job — really good, painstaking craftsmanship — on some dining-room

chairs which had been in storage since 1939. For this he charged just over \$3 a chair, bringing the chairs back one at a time himself, riding his bicycle, with the chair balanced on the handle bars. If a thing can be carried on a bicycle, then it can be delivered to your house — that is the local tradesmen's slogan. Anything that is beyond the powers of the *vélo* to negotiate has to be fetched by the purchaser.

As the long, hot summer suddenly changed into winter at the beginning of November we had our first bout, apprehensively enough, with our central-heating apparatus. We had laid in our season's stock of coal and coke earlier, at a cost of \$260. (Wood comes free from our "well-timbered" estate.)

But the implement designed to receive this fuel, lurking down near the wine cellar, is one of the most forbidding, Dali-esque confections that I have come across.

Its basic shape is oblong, but strange chains of various calibers wind their tortuous ways about its surface, through pulleys and around wheels. Weights and counterweights swing, unconvincingly enough, in this tangle; and on top there is a single demonic gauge, the hands of which are somehow controlled by the chain-and-weight section of the apparatus. However, it does — against all the odds — seem to keep the house warm.



(To be concluded)

A local youth comes in for an hour every morning to make up the fire. He receives 28 cents for his hour's work.

We now have an electric washing machine (price \$215), and glad of it we are. While we were dependent on the local laundries, we had a bad time. For one thing, the laundries could not agree to stagger their summer holidays. All closed down simultaneously right through the month of August. Then their prices are — by French standards — very high. Our weekly bill for two people used to average \$3.40. And fellow suburbanites shook their heads at 12 cents for laundering a sheet.

But that was one of the lesser afflictions of a flaming August. Because of the phenomenal summer, the house played host to huge quantities of flies and — no doubt because of the Seine a few hundred yards away — to a plague of mosquitoes. There were no screens on any of the doors or windows.

So every night, as a woebegone act of faith, we would go to bed daubed with one of those preparations which induce only added enthusiasm among the mosquitoes, and faint nausea on the part of the wearer.

Several times a night we would have to switch on the light and go to work with Flit gun, swatter, and pillow. Dawn would find us haggardly surveying a stricken field.

## ATOMIC FISSION, APRIL 1387

by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

*Whan that Aprille, douce and pluviale. . . .*

Hand halted. Ink was pending in the fork  
Where two tongues divided, equal twins.  
Down the hairline of the slitten quill  
Language in poise.

He looked outdoors  
On Kentish spring — fresh as a *marguerite*?  
Fresh as a *day's eye* we say in Our Town?

The barnyard pinion dipped deep in the horn,  
Struck, and rewrote:  
*Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote. . . .*

English was born.



## IF THIS WERE MY PLACE

by M. F. K. FISHER

M. F. K. FISHER is widely known for her understanding of the pleasures of the table. Author of many books and articles in this field, she is now living in California.

IT is as impossible to say what is The Perfect Restaurant as The Perfect Mate. A man will swear he wants women tall and quiet and then fall profoundly in love with a five-foot flibbertigibbet. In the same way, what I am convinced I now want when I eat in public has no connection with where I may blissfully find myself tomorrow, fork in hand.

This is for now, though. This is what I fume about *now*, when I must submit myself to the dubious delights of dining abroad, in a restaurant run for my theoretical pleasure and the owner's possible profit. This is, as well, what seems best, most proper, most thoroughly enjoyable, about the rite of non-private nourishment. This is, in brief, what I would want if I were running this place.

I like quiet. I hate a hysterical hubbub, whether it be of voices or of clashed plates. On the other hand, a hush which makes anything more than whispers a social outrage is equally distressing to me — or perhaps more so, because it too often smacks of ostentation and pretense: the fake crystal chandeliers, the gliding muted "captains," of a hinterland Ritz.

Modern soundproofing, strange square pancakes glued to any old kind of walls and ceilings, performs miracles indeed. So, much more expensively, do eager young architects with Ideas: they break up a barn of a place into three or four well-related rooms, seemingly no bigger than cubbyholes, and there you are, sitting cozily before a cut off the joint and a pint of Old-and-Bitter (such reformed mausoleums seem to lean toward the

twedy side, for some reason — or is it the young architects who do?), not quite certain just who is behind you in the rationed dark, nor even who may be coming through the door from the paneled bar, and not caring at all because of the general feeling of intimacy and quiet.

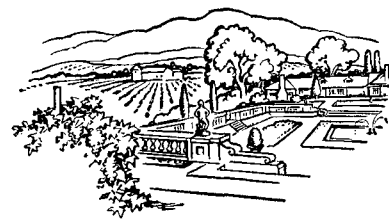
That sounds fine, and so it can be. It can also be oppressively quaint and soundless. You can drink and eat and even try to talk in a kind of super-artful vacuum, until finally you wonder if anyone else in the room is still breathing. You begin to feel that everything human about you except your dwindling appetite has been sucked out in a kind of discreet and decorative catharsis, until as a gentle proof that you still live you are handed a synthetic clay churchwarden's pipe, with your name tagged on it, male or even female.

This is, generally, a discouraging ritual, and you are inclined to go to the nearest chili hut the next time you consider risking, with any seriousness, the hazards of such whimsy. I do not like the clay-pipe, rough-brick, crackling-hearth style of modern "restauranterie."

Perhaps one good reason (or rather two reasons) for my innate distrust of such nutritional balderdash is that I love the two extremes of American pubs: Joe's All-Nite Diner and the Chambord . . . la Buvette de la Gare and Foyot's . . .

I love, as much as diners, the beautifully suave, knowing, experienced restaurants, the kind that perforce can exist only in great cities where desirable women and intelligent worldlings live. The last one I was in, too long ago, gave me great satisfaction, as did the delightful hats of most of the women in it and the flicked cuffs and the child-blue boutonnières of their escorts. I liked it all . . . the flames under the gleaming dishes, and the murmur of fluty Eastern voices, and the finnan haddie I ate, the best in my life, to lay the ghost of all the bad I had eaten in my childhood.

But such a restaurant must be good, and honest, and real, as well as suave and knowing. There are a dozen places within call of me, this minute, with the appearances of such gastronomical grandeur, but with nothing, nothing at all, to bolster them, beyond the ornate chafing dishes and the eager supercilious stewards and the too hot plates, and all the diners pretending this is almost as good as the real thing. I hate such



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restaurants even more than I hate the tweedy English-inn type of chop-house.

I think now, willy-nilly, of the most dismal restaurant in the American world, to my mind, the small-town coffee shop. I have been in hundreds of them, and I firmly believe that until their windows grow steamy and the waitress lets her hair fall vaguely out of place and the coffee machine sends off little pops of extra steam which the café manager frowns on because of Waste, they are just about the most horrid holes ever invented for such a decent ceremony as that of nourishing our poor tired puzzled bodies.

There are slabs of bad pie behind a piece of smeared plate glass. There are used dishes in a streamlined and doubtless antiseptic sink beneath the counter. There are tables complete with paper napkins in chromed dispensers and with tasteless pepper and medicated salt in inadequate shakers. There are chairs that rattle against the hard sanitary floors. There is, perhaps, canned music from a juke box, dependent upon desperately cheerful diners or the five-cent profligacy of the manager. Such hellholes



of gastronomy need a *lot* of steam on the windows, a *very* healthy fine-pated waitress, and a really energetic coffee machine, to make them anything but hell.

It is understandable that many of us, tossed onto the endless roads of this continent, head in our wanderings for the low-brow diners, rather than these so-called coffee shops — the kind Hemingway and many a lesser giant have written about, the long, narrow real-or-imitation railroad cars, warm, bright, easy to enter and leave, redolent of other people's cigarettes and rain-flecked jackets, of coffee and hot soup. Where else can a hungry traveler go, once having spurned the "shops," but to these metamorphosed cars?

I have read almost every guide

made available to the general public, I imagine, about American eating places. The memorable meals I have found in small-town hotels I can count only too easily on one hand, although



I have traveled fairly widely and have carried with me, along with my normal number of fingers and thumbs, my "curious nose," first asset of even the most amateurish gastronomer.

The guides I have most trusted have led me, almost invariably, to tearoomy places, and although I myself dislike them I can understand why most travelers prefer their fairly honest regional cooking (hot biscuits, Ladies' Aid desserts, Mrs. Frazee's Famous Chicken Puff) to the alternatives of shoddy Ritz or pool hall. Dietetically they are safe, or at least safer than the steam-table Béchamel of one and the iridescent corned beef of the other. Their calories may be high — all that whipped cream on the pecan pie on Thursdays! — but the ptomaine mortality is very low indeed, and their canaries do sing so sweetly, innocent of juke.

Once in a Western state I followed the recommendations of a best-selling gastronomical guide and went to a fantastically dirty hole and ate the best barbecued spareribs of my life. And once in Georgia I obeyed the same mentor and went grudgingly to the local Waldorf, there called the Poinsettia, I think, and was rocked where I sat to have the chef, yes the *chef*, read my order and then send me a glass of properly chilled dry sherry, when I was wondering with understandable grimness if a double Martini would see me through the evening. (He came in later, and we shared a bottle of excellent wine from Maryland under the dusty fly-specked "electroliers.")

But such accidents are rare. In general the mobile gourmets of the country have a very tough time indeed. I suffer for them.

I do so vicariously at this period in my life, for I am stationary and at least five hundred miles from the

nearest decent eating-place. I know that such a statement is blatantly intolerant and unfair. The great Henri Charpentier now runs a little and good restaurant near Redondo Beach — but when I go there I want to sleep in a motel near-by, rather than drive three hundred miles through smog, round trip. There is a place on La Cienega where deft waiters in scarlet coats move in the light from Georgian silver candelabra — but the Yorkshire pudding is burned and lead-heavy. There is an old house in San Juan Capistrano beside the shallow stream where crayfish live — but tacos give me a stomach-ache.

San Francisco, only *five* hundred miles away, has good places for the civilized nourishment of the human body. I can think, this minute, of a dozen, where I could walk in, sit down, and have the ancient Yugoslav waiter snarl amicably at me and then flap across my knees a real napkin, although the prices would indicate paper; where I could order anything I wanted, based on fresh cracked crab, bay shrimps, or lobster; where I could see the man slouch to the big icebox at the end of the dining room and pull out a perfectly chilled bottle of the proper wine.

If I were running this place, *this* place, I'd leave it just as it is, cluttered and fummy and right — right for now, that is: a bottle of cold light white wine, sizzling crab-legs meunière, crisp bread on an ugly thick white plate, and beyond them the fog and the sound of harbor horns. But last week another place was right, a lunch of pure fantasy, of equally fantastic expense and "restauranterie," in a beautifully appointed and beautifully managed and beautifully dishonest Beverly Hills hash house. And far back in my mind is that light high-voiced subtle room in New York, where the champagne and the finnan haddie were so completely right.

If I were running this place, the mythical Perfect Restaurant, I'd try to be honest and fantastic and artful, so that I could serve forth what would be, at a given moment, the essential food, the nourishment most needed in a man's Design for Living.

